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*Putnam and the Wolfe.*

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*Capt. Putnam and Durkee's Escape.*

THE  
LIFE AND HEROIC EXPLOITS  
OF  
ISRAEL PUTNAM,

MAJOR-GENERAL IN THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

*Illustrated with Plates, from original designs.*

BY COLONEL DAVID HUMPHREYS,  
Aid-de-camp to General Washington, and Minister Plenipotentiary to the  
Spanish Court.



BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL

NEW-YORK:  
PUBLISHED BY EZRA STRONG

1834.

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.P9H98

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# MEMOIRS

OF

## MAJOR-GENERAL PUTNAM.

ISRAEL PUTNAM, who, through a regular gradation of promotion, became the senior Major-General in the army of the United States, and next in rank to General Washington, was born at Salem, Massachusetts, on the 7th day of January, 1718. His father, Captain Joseph Putnam, was the son of Mr. John Putnam, *Thom* who, with two brothers, came from the south of England, and were among the first settlers of Salem.

When we thus behold a person, from the humble walks of life, starting unnoticed in the career of fame, and, by an undeviating progress through a life of honour, arriving at the highest dignity in the state, curiosity is strongly excited, and philosophy loves to trace the path of glory from the cradle of obscurity to the summit of elevation.

Although our ancestors, the first settlers of this land, amidst the extreme pressure of po-

*† of father name John  
Buckingham born in 1684*

verty and danger, early instituted schools for the education of youth designed for the learned professions, yet it was thought sufficient to instruct those destined to labour on the earth, in reading, writing, and such rudiments of arithmetic as might be requisite for keeping the accounts of their little transactions with each other. Few farmers' sons had more advantages, none less. In this state of mediocrity it was the lot of young Putnam to be placed. His early instruction was not considerable, and the active scenes of life in which he was afterwards engaged, prevented the opportunity of great literary improvement. His numerous original letters, though deficient in scholastic accuracy, always display the goodness of his heart, and frequently the strength of his native genius. He had a certain laconic mode of expression, and an unaffected epigrammatic turn, which characterized most of his writings.

To compensate partially for the deficiency of education, though nothing can remove or counterbalance the inconveniences experienced from it in public life, he derived from his parents the source of innumerable advantages in the stamina of a vigorous constitution. Nature, liberal in bestowing on him bodily strength, hardiness, and activity, was by no means parsimonious in mental endowments. While we leave the qualities of the understanding to be developed in the process of life, it may not be improper, in this place, to designate some of the

circumstances which were calculated to distinguish him afterwards as a partisan officer.

Courage, enterprise, activity, and perseverance, were the first characteristics of his mind. There is a kind of mechanical courage, the offspring of pride, habit, or discipline, that may push a coward not only to perform his duty, but even to venture on acts of heroism. Putnam's courage was of a different species. It was ever attended with a serenity of soul, a clearness of conception, a degree of self-possession, and a superiority to all the vicissitudes of fortune, entirely distinct from any thing that can be produced by the ferment of blood, and flutter of spirits, which not unfrequently precipitate men to action, when stimulated by intoxication or some other transient exhilaration. The heroic character, thus founded on constitution and animal spirits, cherished by education and ideas of personal freedom, confirmed by temperance and habits of exercise, was completed by the dictate of reason, the love of his country, and an invincible sense of duty. Such were the qualities and principles that enabled him to meet unappalled the shafts of adversity, and to pass in triumph through the furnace of affliction.

His disposition was as frank and generous as his mind was fearless and independent. He disguised nothing; indeed he seemed incapable of disguise. Perhaps in the intercourse he was ultimately obliged to have with an artful world,



PUTNAM CHASTISING A BOY AT BOSTON.—p. 6.

his sincerity, on some occasions, outwent his discretion. Although he had too much suavity in his nature to commence a quarrel, he had too much sensibility not to feel, and too much honour not to resent, an intended insult. The first time he went to Boston he was insulted for his rusticity by a boy of twice his size and age; after bearing the sarcasms until his patience was worn out, he challenged, engaged, and vanquished his unmannerly antagonist, to the great diversion of a crowd of spectators. While a stripling, his ambition was to perform the labour of a man, and to excel in athletic diversions. In that rude, but masculine age, whenever the village youth assembled on their usual occasions of festivity, pitching the bar, running,



leaping, and wrestling, were favourite amusements. At such gymnastic exercises, in which, during the heroic times of ancient Greece and Rome, conquest was considered as the promise of future military fame, he bore the palm from almost every ring.

Before the refinements of luxury, and the consequent increase of expenses, had rendered the maintenance of a family inconvenient or burdensome in America, the sexes entered into matrimony at an early age. Competence, attainable by all, was the limit of pursuit. After the hardships of making a new settlement were overcome, and the evils of penury removed, the inhabitants enjoyed, in the lot of equality, innocence, and security, scenes equally delightful with those pictured by the glowing imagination of the poets in their favourite pastoral life, or fabulous golden age. Indeed, the condition of mankind was never more enviable. Neither disparity of age and fortune, nor schemes of ambition and grandeur, nor the pride and avarice of high-minded and mercenary parents, interposed those obstacles to the union of congenial souls, which frequently in more polished society, prevent, embitter, or destroy all the felicity of the connubial state. Mr. Putnam, before he attained the twenty-first year of his age, married Miss Pope, daughter of Mr. John Pope, of Salem, by whom he had ten children. He lost the wife of his youth in 1764. Some time after he married Mrs. Gardiner, widow of the late Mr.

Gardiner of Gardiner's Island, by whom he had no issue. She died in 1777.

739 In the year 1749 he removed from Salem to Pomfret, an inland, fertile town, in Connecticut, forty miles east of Hartford; having here purchased a considerable tract of land, he applied himself successfully to agriculture.

The first years on a new farm, are not however exempt from disasters and disappointments, which can only be remedied by stubborn and patient industry. Our farmer, sufficiently occupied in building a house and barn, felling woods, making fences, sowing grain, planting orchards, and taking care of his stock, had to encounter, in turn, the calamities occasioned by drought in summer, blast in harvest, loss of cattle in winter, and the desolation of his sheepfold by wolves. In one night he had seventy fine sheep and goats killed, besides many lambs and kids wounded. This havoc was committed by a she wolf, which, with her annual whelps, had for several years infested the vicinity. The young were commonly destroyed by the vigilance of the hunters, but the old one was too sagacious to come within reach of gunshot; on being closely pursued she would generally fly to the western woods, and return the next winter with another litter of whelps.

This wolf at length became such an intolerable nuisance, that Mr. Putnam entered into a combination with five of his neighbours, to hunt alternately until they could destroy her.

Two by rotation, were to be constantly in pursuit. It was known that, having lost the toes from one foot, by a steel trap, she made one track shorter than the other. By this vestige, the pursuers recognised, in a light snow, the route of this pernicious animal. Having followed her to Connecticut river, and found she had turned back in a direct course towards Pomfret, they immediately returned, and by ten o'clock the next morning the bloodhounds had driven her into a den, about three miles distant from the house of Mr. Putnam. The people soon collected with dogs, guns, straw, fire and sulphur, to attack the common enemy. With this apparatus several unsuccessful efforts were made to force her from the den. The hounds came back badly wounded, and refused to return. The smoke of blazing straw had no effect; nor did the fumes of burnt brimstone, with which the cavern was filled, compel her to quit the retirement. Wearied with such fruitless attempts, which had brought the time to ten o'clock at night, Mr. Putnam tried once more to make his dog enter, but in vain; he proposed to his negro man to go down into the cavern and shoot the wolf: the negro declined the hazardous service. Then it was that the master, angry at the disappointment, and declaring that he was ashamed to have a coward in his family, resolved to destroy the ferocious beast, lest she should escape through some unknown fissure of the rock. His neighbours strongly re-

monstrated against the perilous enterprise: but he, knowing that wild animals were intimidated by fire, and having provided several strips of birch-bark, the only combustible material which he could obtain, that would afford light in this deep and darksome cave, prepared for his descent. Having, accordingly, divested himself of his coat and waistcoat, and having a long rope fastened round his legs, by which he might be pulled back, at a concerted signal, he entered head foremost, with the blazing torch in his hand.

The aperture of the den, on the east side of a very high ledge of rocks, is about two feet square; from thence it descends obliquely fifteen feet, then running horizontally about ten more, it ascends gradually sixteen feet towards its termination. The sides of this subterraneous cavity are composed of smooth and solid rocks, which seem to have been divided from each other by some former earthquake. The top and bottom are also of stone, and the entrance, in winter, being covered with ice, is exceedingly slippery. It is in no place high enough for a man to raise himself upright, nor in any part more than three feet in width.

Having groped his passage to the horizontal part of the den, the most terrifying darkness appeared in front of the dim circle of light afforded by his torch. It was silent as the house of death. None but monsters of the desert had ever before explored this solitary mansion of horror. Cautiously proceeding onward, he

came to the ascent, which he slowly mounted on his hands and knees until he discovered the glaring eye-balls of the wolf, who was sitting at the extremity of the cavern. Startled at the sight of fire, she gnashed her teeth, and gave a sullen growl. As soon as he had made the necessary discovery, he kicked the rope as a signal for pulling him out. The people, at the mouth of the den, who had listened with painful anxiety, hearing the growling of the wolf, and supposing their friend to be in the most imminent danger, drew him forth with such celerity that his shirt was stripped over his head and his skin severely lacerated. After he had adjusted his clothes, and loaded his gun with nine buck-shot, holding a torch in one hand and the musket in the other, he descended the second time. When he drew nearer than before, the wolf, assuming a still more fierce and terrible appearance, howling, rolling her eyes, snapping her teeth, and dropping her head between her legs, was evidently in the attitude and on the point of springing at him. At the critical instant he levelled and fired at her head. Stunned with the shock, and suffocated with the smoke, he immediately found himself drawn out of the cave. But having refreshed himself, and permitted the smoke to dissipate, he went down the third time. Once more he came within sight of the wolf, who appearing very passive, he applied the torch to her nose, and perceiving her dead, he took hold of her ears, and then kicking the



PUTNAM DRAGGING THE WOLF FROM THE DEN.—p. 12.

rope, the people above, with no small exultation, dragged them both out together.

I have offered these facts in greater detail, because they contain a display of character; and because they have been erroneously related in several European publications, and very much mutilated in the history of Connecticut, a work as replete with falsehood as destitute of genius, printed in London.

Prosperity, at length, begun to attend the agricultural affairs of Mr. Putnam. He was acknowledged to be a skilful and indefatigable manager. His fields were mostly enclosed with stone walls. His crops commonly succeeded, because the land was well tilled and manured.

His pastures and meadows became luxuriant. His cattle were of the best breed, and in good order. His garden and fruit-trees prolific. With the avails of the surplusage of his produce, foreign articles were purchased. Within doors he found the compensation of his labours, in the plenty of excellent provisions, as well as in the happiness of domestic society.

A more particular description of his transition from narrow to easy circumstances might be given; but the mind that shall have acquired an idea of the habits of labour and simplicity, to which the industrious colonists were accustomed, will readily supply the omission. The effect of this gradual acquisition of property, generally favourable to individual virtue and public felicity, should not, however, be passed over in silence. If there is something fascinating in the charms of a country life, from the contemplation of beautiful landscapes, there is likewise something elevating to the soul, in the consciousness of being lord of the soil, and having the power of creating them. The man can scarcely be guilty of a sordid action, or even descend to an ungenerous thought, who, removed from the apprehension of want, sees his farm daily meliorating and assuming whatever appearance he pleases to prescribe. This situation converts the farmer into a species of rural philosopher, by inspiring an honest pride in his rank as a freeman, flattering the natural propensity for personal independence, and nou-

rishing an unlimited hospitality and philanthropy in his social character.

But the time had now arrived which was to turn the instruments of husbandry into weapons of hostility, and to exchange the hunting of wolves, who had ravaged the sheep-folds, for the pursuit after savages, who had desolated the frontiers. Mr. Putnam was about thirty-seven years old, when the war between England and France, which preceded the last, broke out in America. His reputation must have been favourably known to the government, since among the first troops that were levied by Connecticut, in 1755, he was appointed to the command of a company in Lyman's regiment of Provincials. I have mentioned his age at this period, expressly to obviate a prevalent opinion, that he was far advanced in life when he commenced his military service.

As he was extremely popular, he found no difficulty in enlisting his complement of recruits from the most hardy, enterprising, and respectable young men of his neighbourhood. The regiment joined the army, at the opening of the campaign, not far distant from Crown-Point. Soon after his arrival at camp, he became intimately acquainted with the famous partisan Captain, afterwards Major Rogers, with whom he was frequently associated in traversing the wilderness, reconnoitring the enemy's lines, gaining intelligence, and taking straggling prisoners, as well as in beating up



the quarters and surprising the advanced pickets of their army. For these operations a corps of rangers was formed from the irregulars. The first time Rogers and Putnam were detached with a party of these light troops, it was the fortune of the latter to preserve, with his own hand, the life of the former, and to cement their friendship with the blood of one of their enemies.

The object of this expedition was to obtain an accurate knowledge of the position and state of the works at Crown Point. It was impracticable to approach with their party near enough for this purpose, without being discovered. Alone, the undertaking was sufficiently hazardous, on account of the swarms of hostile Indians who infested the woods. Our two partisans, however, left all their men at a convenient distance, with strict orders to continue concealed until their return. Having thus cautiously taken their arrangements, they advanced with the profoundest silence in the evening; and lay, during the night, contiguous to the fortress. Early in the morning they approached so close as to be able to give satisfactory information to the General who had sent them, on the several points to which their attention had been directed: but Captain Rogers, being at a little distance from Captain Putnam, fortuitously met a stout Frenchman, who instantly seized his fusee with one hand, and with the other attempted to stab him, while he called to an adjacent guard for assistance. The guard

Oct. 21  
1755

answered. Putnam, perceiving the imminent danger of his friend, and that no time was to be lost, or farther alarm given by firing, ran rapidly to them, while they were yet struggling, and with the but-end of his piece laid the Frenchman dead at his feet. The partisans, to elude pursuit, precipitated their flight, joined the party, and returned without loss to the encampment. Not many occasions occurred for partisans to display their talents in the course of this summer. The war was checkered with various fortune in different quarters—such as the total defeat of General Braddock, and the splendid victory of Sir William Johnson over the French troops, commanded by the Baron Dieskau. The brilliancy of this success, was necessary to console the Americans for the disgrace of that disaster. The time for which the colonial troops engaged to serve terminated with the campaign. Putnam was re-appointed, and again took the field in 1756.

Few are so ignorant of war as not to know, that military adventures, in the night, are always extremely liable to accidents. Captain Putnam, having been commanded to reconnoitre the enemy's camp at *the Ovens* near *Ticonderoga*, took the brave Lieutenant Robert Durkee as his companion. In attempting to execute these orders, he narrowly missed being taken himself in the first instance, and killing his friend in the second. It was customary for the British and Provincial troops to place their

fires round their camp, which frequently exposed them to the enemy's scouts and patrols. A contrary practice, then unknown in the English army, prevailed among the French and Indians. The plan was much more rational; they kept their fires in the centre, lodged their men circularly at a distance, and posted their sentinels in the surrounding darkness. Our partisans approached the camp, and supposing the sentries were within the circle of fires, crept upon their hands and knees with the greatest possible caution, until, to their utter astonishment, they found themselves in the thickest of the enemy. The sentinels, discovering them, fired, and slightly wounded Durkee in the thigh. He and Putnam had no alternative. They fled. The latter, being foremost, and scarcely able to see his hand before him, soon plunged into a clay-pit. Durkee, almost at the identical moment, came tumbling after. Putnam, by no means pleased at finding a companion, and believing him to be one of the enemy, lifted his tomahawk to give the deadly blow, when Durkee, who had followed so closely as to know him, inquired whether he had escaped unhurt. Captain Putnam instantly recognising his voice, dropped his weapon: and both, springing from the pit, made good their retreat to the neighbouring ledges, amidst a shower of random shot. There they betook themselves to a large log, by the side of which they lodged the remainder of the night. Before they lay down, Captain Put



CAPT. PUTNAM AND LIEUT. DURKEE'S ESCAPE.  
p. 17.

nam said he had a little rum in his canteen, which could never be more acceptable or necessary; but on examining the canteen, which hung under his arm, he found the enemy had pierced it with their balls, and that there was not a drop of liquor left. The next day he found fourteen bullet holes in his blanket.

756 In the same summer, a body of the enemy, consisting of six hundred men, attacked the baggage and provision wagons at a place called the half-way-brook; it being equi-distant from Fort Edward, and the south end of Lake George. Having killed the oxen, and plundered the wagons, they retreated with their booty, without having met with such resistance as

might have been expected from the strength of the escort. General Webb, on receiving intelligence of this disaster, ordered the Captains Putnam and Rogers "to take one hundred volunteers in boats, with two wall-pieces and two blunderbusses, and to proceed down Lake George to a certain point; there to leave the batteaux under a proper guard, and thence to cross by land, so as to harass, and, if practicable, intercept the retreating enemy at the narrows." These orders were executed with so much punctuality, that the party arrived at the destined place half an hour before the hostile boats came in view. Here they waited, under cover, until the enemy entered the narrows, with their batteaux loaded with plunder. Then the volunteers poured on them volley after volley, killed many of the oarsmen, sunk a number of their batteaux, and would soon have destroyed the whole body of the enemy, had not the unusual precipitancy of their passage carried them through the narrows into the wide part of South Bay, where they were out of the reach of musket-shot. The shattered remnant of the little fleet soon arrived at Ticonderoga, and gave information that Putnam and Rogers were at the narrows. A fresh party was instantly detached to cut them in pieces, on their return to Fort Edward. Our partisans, sensible of the probability of such an attempt, and being full twenty miles from their boats, strained every nerve to reach them as soon as possi-

ble; which they effected the same night. Next day, when they had returned as far as Sabbath-Day point, they discovered, on shore, the beforementioned detachment of three hundred men, who had passed them in the night, and who now, on perceiving our party, took to their boats with the greatest alacrity, and rowed out to give battle. They advanced in line, maintaining a good mien, and felicitating themselves upon the prospect of an easy conquest, from the great superiority of their numbers. Flushed with these expectations, they were permitted to come within pistol-shot before a gun was fired. At once, the wall-pieces and blunderbusses, which had been brought to rake them in the most vulnerable point, were discharged. As no such reception had been foreseen, the assailants were thrown into the utmost disorder. Their terror and confusion were greatly increased by a well-directed and most destructive fire of the small arms. The larger pieces being reloaded, without annoyance, continued alternately with the musketry to make dreadful havoc, until the rout was completed, and the enemy driven back to Ticonderoga. In this action, one of the bark canoes contained twenty Indians, of whom fifteen were killed. Great numbers, from other boats, both of French and Indians, were seen to fall overboard: but the account of their total loss could never be ascertained. Rogers and Putnam had but one man killed, and two slightly wounded. They now landed on the

point, and having refreshed their men at leisure, returned in good order to the British camp.

Soon after these rencounters, a singular kind of race was run by our nimble-footed Provincial and an active young Frenchman. The liberty of each was by turns at stake. General Webb, wanting a prisoner for the sake of intelligence, sent Capt. Putnam, with five men, to procure one. The Captain concealed himself near the road which leads from Ticonderoga to the Ovens. His men seemed fond of showing themselves, which unsoldier-like conduct he prohibited with the severest reprehension. This rebuke they imputed to unnecessary fear. The observation is as true as vulgar, that persons distinguishable for temerity, when there is no apparent danger, are generally poltroons whenever danger approaches. They had not lain long in the high grass, before a Frenchman and an Indian passed—the Indian was considerably in advance. As soon as the former had gone by, Putnam, relying on the fidelity of his men, sprang up, ran, and ordered them to follow. After running about thirty rods, he seized the Frenchman by the shoulders, and forced him to surrender: But his prisoner, looking round, perceiving no other enemy, and knowing the Indian would be ready in a moment to assist him, began to make an obstinate resistance. Putnam, finding himself betrayed by his men into a perilous dilemma, let go his hold, stepped back, and snapped his piece, which was levelled

at the Frenchman's breast. It missed fire. On this he thought it most prudent to retreat. The Frenchman, in turn, chased him back to his men, who, at last, raised themselves from the grass; which his pursuer espying in good time for himself, made his escape. Putnam, mortified that these men had frustrated his success, dismissed them with disgrace; and not long after accomplished his object. Such little feats, as the capture of a single prisoner, may be of infinitely more consequence than some, who are unacquainted with military affairs, would be apt to imagine. In a country covered with woods, like that part of America, then the seat of war, the difficulty of procuring, and the importance of possessing good intelligence, can scarcely be conceived even by European commanders. They, however, who know its value, will not appreciate lightly the services of an able partisan.

Nothing worthy of remark happened during this campaign, except the loss of Oswego. That fort, which had been built by General Shirley, to protect the peltry trade, cover the country on the Mohawk river, and facilitate an invasion of Canada, by Frontenac and Niagara, fell into the hands of the enemy, with a garrison of sixteen hundred men, and one hundred pieces of cannon.

The active services of Captain Putnam on every occasion attracted the admiration of the public, and induced the Legislature of Connecticut to promote him to a majority in 1757.



Lord Loudon was then Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in America. The expedition against Crown Point, which from the commencement of hostilities had been in contemplation, seemed to give place to a more important operation that was meditated against Louisbourg. But the arrival of the Brest squadron at that place prevented the attempt; and the loss of Fort William Henry served to class this with the two former unsuccessful campaigns. It was rumoured, and partially credited at the time, that General Webb, who commanded in the northern department, had early intimation of the movement of the French army, and might have effectually succoured the garrison. The subsequent facts will place the affair in its proper light.

A few days before the siege, Major Putnam, with two hundred men, escorted General Webb from Fort Edward to Fort William Henry. The object was to examine the state of this fortification, which stood at the southern extremity of Lake George. Several abortive attempts having been made by Major Rogers and others in the night season, Major Putnam proposed to go down the lake in open day-light, land at Northwest Bay, and tarry on shore until he could make satisfactory discovery of the enemy's actual situation at Ticonderoga and the adjacent posts. The plan which he suggested, of landing with only five men, and sending back the boats, to prevent detection, was

*Not Major Robert Rogers but his brother Capt. Richard Rogers. Robt. also was capt. at this time. He did not go at Lake George.*

deemed too hazardous by the General. At length, however, he was permitted to proceed with eighteen volunteers, in three whale boats; but before he arrived at Northwest Bay, he discovered a body of men on an island. Immediately he left two boats to fish at a distance, that they might not occasion an alarm, and returned with the information. The General, seeing him rowing back with great velocity, in a single boat, concluded the others were captured, and sent a skiff, with orders for him alone to come on shore. After advising the General of the circumstances, he urged the expediency of returning to make farther discoveries, and bring off the boats. Leave was reluctantly given. He found his people, and, passing still onward, discovered by the aid of a good perspective glass, a large army in motion. *du* *note* *90* By this time, several of the advanced canoes had nearly surrounded him, but by the swiftness of his whaleboats, he escaped through the midst of them. On his return he informed the General minutely of all he had seen, and intimated his conviction that the expedition must obviously be destined against Fort William Henry. That commander, strictly enjoining silence on the subject, directed him to put his men under an oath of secrecy, and to prepare, without loss of time, to return to the head-quarters of the army. Major Putnam observed, he "hoped his excellency did not intend to neglect so fair an opportunity of giving battle, should the enemy presume to

land." "What do you think we should do here?" replied the General. Accordingly, the next day he returned, and the day after Colonel Monro was ordered from Fort Edward, with his regiment, to re-enforce the garrison. That officer took with him all his rich baggage and camp equipage, notwithstanding Major Putnam's advice to the contrary. The day following his arrival, the enemy landed, and besieged the place.

The Marquis de Montcalm, Commander-in-Chief for the French in Canada, intending to take advantage of the absence of a large proportion of the British force, which he understood to be employed under Lord Loudon against Louisbourg, had assembled whatever men could be spared from Ticonderoga, Crown-Point, and the other garrisons: with these he had combined a considerable corps of Canadians, and a larger body of Indians than had ever before been collected; making in the whole an army of nearly eight thousand men. Our garrison consisted of twenty-five hundred, and was commanded by Colonel Monro, a very gallant officer, who found the means of sending express after express to General Webb, with an account of his situation, and the most pressing solicitation for succour. In the mean time, the army at Fort Edward, which originally amounted to about four thousand, had been considerably augmented by Johnson's troops and the militia. On the eighth or ninth day after the

landing of the French, General Johnson, in consequence of repeated applications, was suffered to march for the relief of the garrison, with all the provincials, militia, and Putnam's rangers; but before they had proceeded three miles, the order was countermanded, and they returned. M. de Montcalm informed Major Putnam, when a prisoner in Canada, that one of his running Indians saw and reported this movement; and, upon being questioned relatively to the numbers, answered in their figurative style, "*If you can count the leaves on the trees, you can count them.*" In effect, the operations of the siege were suspended; and preparations made for re-embarking, when another of the runners reported that the detachment had gone back. The Marquis de Montcalm, provided with a good train of artillery, meeting with no annoyance from the British army, and but inconsiderable interruption from the garrison, accelerated his approaches so rapidly, as to obtain possession of the fort in a short time after completing the investiture. An intercepted letter from General Webb, advising the surrender, was sent into the fort to Colonel Monro by the French general. ✕

The garrison engaged not to serve for eighteen months, and were permitted to march out with the honours of war. But the savages regarded not the capitulation, nor could they be restrained by the utmost exertion of the commanding officer, from committing the most out-

*Capitulation signed Aug 9. 1757*

rageous acts of cruelty. They stripped and plundered all the prisoners, and murdered great numbers in cold blood. Those who escaped by flight, or the protection of the French, arrived in a forlorn condition at Fort Edward. Among these was the commandant of the garrison.

The day succeeding this deplorable scene of carnage and barbarity, Major Putnam having been despatched with his rangers, to watch the motions of the enemy, came to the shore, when their rear was scarcely beyond the reach of musket-shot. They had carried off all the cannon, stores, and water-craft. The fort was demolished. The barracks, the out-houses, and sutlers' booths, were heaps of ruins. The fires, not yet extinct, and the smoke, offensive from the mucilaginous nature of the fuel, but illy concealed innumerable fragments of human skulls and bones, and, in some instances, carcasses half consumed. Dead bodies, weltering in blood, were every where to be seen, violated, with all the wanton mutilations of savage ingenuity. More than one hundred women, some with their brains still oozing from the battered heads, others with their whole hair wrenched collectively with the skin from the bloody skulls, and many, with their throats cut, most inhumanly stabbed and butchered, lay stripped entirely naked, with their bowels torn out, and afforded a spectacle too horrible for description.

Not long after this misfortune, General Lyman succeeded to the command of Fort Edward. He resolved to strengthen it. For this purpose, one hundred and fifty men were employed in cutting timber. To cover them, Captain Little was posted with fifty British regulars, at the head of a thick swamp, about one hundred rods eastward of the fort, to which his communication lay over a tongue of land, formed on the one side by the swamp, and by a creek on the other.

One morning, at daybreak, a sentinel saw indistinctly several birds, as he conceived, come from the swamp, and fly over him with incredible swiftness. While he was ruminating on these wonderful birds, and endeavouring to form some idea of their colour, shape, and size, an arrow buried itself in the limb of a tree just above his head. He now discovered the quality and design of these winged messengers of fate, and gave the alarm. Instantly the working party began to retreat along the defile. A large body of savages had concealed themselves in the morass before the guard was posted, and were attempting in this way to kill the sentinel without noise, with design to surprise the whole party. Finding the alarm given, they rushed from the covert, shot and tomahawked those who were nearest at hand, and pressed hard on the remainder of the unarmed fugitives. Captain Little marched to their relief, and, by pouring on the Indians a well-timed fire, checked

the pursuit, and enabled such of the fatigued men as did not fall in the first onset, to retire to the fort. Thither he sent for assistance, his little party being almost overpowered by numbers. But the commandant, imagining that the main body of the enemy were approaching for a general assault, called in his outposts, and shut the gates.

Major Putnam lay, with his rangers, on an island adjacent to the fort. Having heard the musketry, and learned that his friend Captain Little was in the utmost peril, he plunged into the river at the head of his corps, and waded through the water towards the place of engagement. This brought him so near to the fort, that General Lyman, apprized of his design, and unwilling that the lives of a few more brave men should be exposed to what he deemed inevitable destruction, mounted the parapet, and ordered him to proceed no farther. The major only took time to make the best short apology he could, and marched onward. This is the only instance, in the whole course of his military service, wherein he did not pay the strictest obedience to orders; and in this instance his motive was highly commendable. But when such conduct, even if sanctified by success, is passed over with impunity, it demonstrates that all is not right in the military system. In a disciplined army, such as that of the United States became under General Washington, an officer guilty of a slighter violation of orders,

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MAJ. PUTNAM GOING TO CAPT. LITTLE'S ASSISTANCE.—29.

however elevated in rank or meritorious in service, would have been brought before the bar of a court martial. Were it not for the seductive tendency of a brave man's example, I might have been spared the mortification of making these remarks on the conduct of an officer, whose distinguishing characteristics were promptitude for duty and love of subordination, as well as cheerfulness to encounter every species of difficulty and danger.

The rangers of Putnam soon opened their way for a junction with the little handful of regulars, who still obstinately maintained their ground. By his advice, the whole rushed impetuously with shouts and huzzas into the



swamp. The savages fled on every side, and were chased, with no inconsiderable loss on their part, so long as the day-light lasted. On ours, only one man was killed in the pursuit. His death was immediately avenged by that of the Indian who shot him. This Indian was one of the runners, a chosen body of active young men, who are used not only to procure intelligence and convey tidings, but also to guard the rear on a retreat.

Here it will not be unseasonable to mention some of the customs in war peculiar to the aborigines, which on the present as well as other occasions, they put in practice. Whenever a retreating, especially a flying party, had gained the summit of a rising ground, they secreted one or two runners behind trees, copses, or bushes, to fire at the enemy on their ascending the hill. This commonly occasioned the enemy to halt and form for battle. In the interim the runners used such dexterity as to be rarely discovered, or if discovered, they vanished behind the height, and rejoined their brother warriors, who, having thus stolen a distance, were oftentimes seen by their pursuers no more. Or if the pursuers were too eager, they seldom failed to atone for their rashness by falling into an ambuscade. The Mohawks, who were afterwards much employed in scouts under the orders of Major Putnam, and who were perfectly versed in all the wiles and stratagems of their countrymen, showed him the mode of

avoiding the evils of either alternative. In suspicious thickets, and at the borders of every considerable eminence, a momentary pause was made, while they, in different parts, penetrated or ascended with a cautiousness that cannot be easily described. They seemed all eye and ear. When they found no lurking mischief, they would beckon with the hand, and pronounce the word "OWISEB," with a long labial hissing, the *O* being almost quiescent. This was ever the watchword for the main body to advance.

Indians who went to war together, and who, for any reason, found it necessary to separate into different routes, always left two or three runners at the place of separation, to give timely notice to either party in case of pursuit.

If a warrior chanced to straggle and lose himself in the woods, or be retarded by accident or wound, the party missing him would frequently, on their march, break down a bush or a shrub, and leave the top pointing in the direction they had gone, that the straggler, when he should behold it, might shape his course accordingly.

We come to the campaign when General Abercrombie took the command at Fort Edward. That general ordered Major Putnam, with sixty men, to proceed by land to South Bay, on Lake George, for the purpose of making discoveries, and intercepting the enemy's parties. The latter, in compliance with these or-

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ders, posted himself at Wood Creek, near its entrance into South Bay. On this bank, which forms a jutting precipice ten or twelve feet above the water, he erected a stone parapet thirty feet in length, and masked it with young pine-trees, cut at a distance, and so artfully planted as to imitate the natural growth. Hence he sent back fifteen of his men, who had fallen sick. Distress for want of provisions, occasioned by the length of march, and time spent on this temporary fortification, compelled him to deviate from a rule he had established, never to permit a gun to be fired but at an enemy while on a scout. He was now obliged to shoot a buck, which had jumped into the creek, in order to eke out their scanty subsistence until the fourth day after the completion of the works. About ten o'clock that evening, one of the men on duty at the margin of the bay, informed him that a fleet of bark canoes, filled with men, was steering towards the mouth of the creek. He immediately called in all his sentinels, and ordered every man to his post. A profound stillness reigned in the atmosphere, and the full moon shone with uncommon brightness. The creek, which the enemy entered, is about six rods wide, and the bank opposite to the parapet above twenty feet high. It was intended to permit the canoes in front to pass—they had accordingly just passed, when a soldier accidentally struck his firelock against a stone. The commanding officer in the van canoe heard

the noise, and repeated several times the savage watch-word,—OWISH! Instantly the canoes huddled together, with their centre precisely in front of the works, covering the creek for a considerable distance above and below. The officers appeared to be in deep consultation, and the fleet on the point of returning, when Major Putnam, who had ordered his men in the most peremptory manner not to fire until he should set the example, gave the signal, by discharging his piece. They fired. Nothing could exceed the inextricable confusion and apparent consternation occasioned by this well-concerted attack. But, at last, the enemy finding, from the unfrequency in the firing, that the number of our men must be small, resolved to land below and surround them. Putnam, apprehensive of this from the movement, sent Lieutenant Robert Durkee, with twelve men, about thirty rods down the creek, who arrived in time to repulse the party which attempted to land. Another small detachment, under Lieutenant Parsons, was ordered up the creek to prevent any similar attempt. In the mean time, Major Putnam kept up, through the whole night, an incessant and deadly fire on the main body of the enemy, without receiving any thing in return but shot void of effect, accompanied with dolorous groans, miserable shrieks, and dismal savage yells. After daybreak, he was advised that one part of the enemy had effected a landing considerably below, and were rapidly ad-

\* *Sand. H. Parsons* (?)

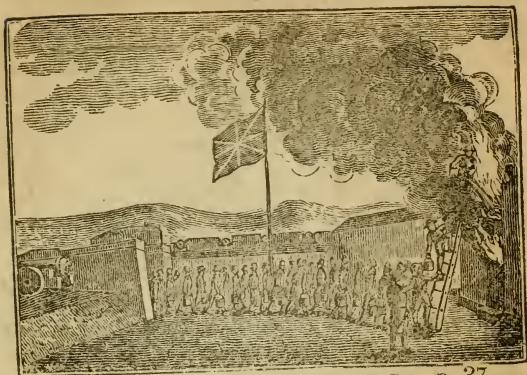
vancing to cut off his retreat. Apprised of the great superiority still opposed to him, as well as of the situation of his own soldiers, some of whom were entirely destitute of ammunition, and the rest reduced to one or two rounds each, he commanded them to swing their packs. By hastening the retreat, in good order, they had just time to retire far enough up the creek to prevent being enclosed. During this long-continued action, in which the Americans had slain at least five times their own number, only one Provincial and one Indian were wounded on their side. These unfortunate men had been sent off for camp in the night, with two men to assist them, and directions to proceed by Wood-Creek as the safest, though not the shortest route. But having taken a nearer way, they were pursued and overtaken by the Indians, who, from the blood on the leaves and bushes, believed that they were on the trail of our whole party. The wounded, despairing of mercy, and unable to fly, insisted that the well soldiers should make their escape, which, on a moment's deliberation, they effected. The Provincial, whose thigh was broken by a ball, on the approach of the savages, fired his piece, and killed three of them; after which he was quickly hacked in pieces. The Indian, however, was saved alive. This man Major Putnam saw afterwards in Canada, where he likewise learned that his enemy, in the rencounter at Wood-Creek, consisted of five hundred French

and Indians, under the command of the celebrated partisan Molang, and that no party, since the war, had suffered so severely, as more than one half of those who went out never returned.

Our brave little company, reduced to forty in number, had proceeded along the bank of the creek about an hour's march, when Major Putnam, being in front, was fired on by a party just at hand. He, rightly appreciating the advantage often obtained by assuming a bold countenance on a critical occasion, in a stentorophonic tone, ordered his men to rush on the enemy, and promised that they should soon give a good account of them. It proved to be a scout of Provincials, who conceived they were firing upon the French; but the commanding officer, knowing Putnam's voice, cried out, that they were all friends. Upon this the Major told him abruptly, that, "friends or enemies, they all deserved to be hanged for not killing more when they had so fair a shot." In fact, but one man was mortally wounded. While these things were transacted, a faithful soldier, whose ammunition had been nearly exhausted, made his way to the fort, and gave such information, that General Lyman was detached with five hundred men to cover the retreat. Major Putnam met them at only twelve miles distance from the fort, to which they returned the next day.

In the winter of 1757,<sup>#</sup> when Colonel Haviland was commandant at Fort Edward, the barracks adjoining to the northwest bastion

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PUTNAM SAVES THE MAGAZINE.—p. 37.

took fire. They extended within twelve feet of the magazine, which contained three hundred barrels of powder. On its first discovery, the fire raged with great violence. The commandant endeavoured, in vain, by discharging some pieces of heavy artillery against the supporters of this flight of barracks, to level them with the ground. Putnam arrived from the island where he was stationed at the moment when the blaze approached that end which was contiguous to the magazine. Instantly a vigorous attempt was made to extinguish the conflagration. A way was opened by a postern gate to the river, and the soldiers were employed in bringing water; which he, having mounted on a ladder to the eaves of the building, received and threw on

the flame. It continued, notwithstanding their utmost efforts, to gain on them. He stood, enveloped in smoke, so near the sheet of fire, that a pair of thick blanket mittens were burnt entirely from his hands; he was supplied with another pair dipped in water. Colonel Haviland, fearing that he would perish in the flames, called to him to come down. But he entreated that he might be suffered to remain, since destruction must inevitably ensue if their exertions should be remitted. The gallant commandant, not less astonished than charmed at the boldness of his conduct, forbade any more effects to be carried out of the fort, animated the men to redoubled diligence, and exclaimed, "if we must be blown up, we will go altogether." At last, when the barracks were seen to be tumbling, Putnam descended, placed himself at the interval, and continued from an incessant rotation of replenished buckets to pour water on the magazine. The outside planks were already consumed by the proximity of the fire, and as only one thickness of timber intervened, the trepidation now became general and extreme. Putnam, still undaunted, covered with a cloud of cinders, and scorched with the intensity of the heat, maintained his position until the fire subsided, and the danger was wholly over. He had contended for one hour and a half with that terrible element. His legs, his thighs, his arms, and his face were blistered; and when he pulled off his second pair of mittens, the skin from his



hands and fingers followed them. It was a month before he recovered. The commandant, to whom his merits had before endeared him, could not stifle the emotions of gratitude, due to the man who had been so instrumental in preserving the magazine, the fort, and the garrison.

The repulse before Ticonderoga took place in 1758. General Abercrombie, the British commander in chief in America, conducted the expedition. His army, which amounted to nearly sixteen thousand regulars and provincials, was amply supplied with artillery and military stores. This well-appointed corps passed over Lake George, and landed, without opposition, at the point of destination. The troops advanced in columns. Lord Howe, having Major Putnam with him, was in front of the centre. A body of about five hundred men, the advance or pickets of the French army, which had fled at first, began to skirmish with our left. "Putnam," said Lord Howe, "what means that firing?" "I know not, but, with your lordship's leave, will see," replied the former. "I will accompany you," rejoined the gallant young nobleman. In vain did Major Putnam attempt to dissuade him by saying—"My lord, if I am killed, the loss of my life will be of little consequence, but the preservation of yours is of infinite importance to this army." The only answer was, "Putnam, your life is as dear to you as mine is to me; I am determined to go." One hundred of the van, under Major

Putnam, filed off with Lord Howe. They soon met the left flank of the enemy's advance, by whose first fire his lordship fell.—It was a loss indeed; and particularly felt in the operations which occurred three days afterwards. His manners and his virtues had made him the idol of the army. From his first arrival in America, he had accommodated himself\* and his regiment to the peculiar nature of the service. Exemplary to the officer, a friend to the soldier, the model of discipline, he had not failed to encounter every hardship and hazard. Nothing could be more calculated to inspire men with the rash animation of rage, or to temper it with the cool perseverance of revenge, than the sight of such a hero, so beloved, fallen in his country's cause. It had the effect. Putnam's party, having cut their way obliquely through the enemy's ranks, and having been joined by Captain D'Ell, with twenty men, together with some other small parties, charged them so furiously in rear, that nearly three hundred were killed on the spot, and one hundred and forty-eight made prisoners.

In the mean time, from the unskilfulness of the guides, some of our columns were bewildered. The left wing, seeing Putnam's party in their front, advancing over the dead bodies towards them, commenced a brisk and heavy

\* He cut his hair short, and induced the regiment to follow the example. He fashioned their clothing for the activity of service, and divested himself and them of every article of superfluous baggage.

fire, which killed a sergeant and several privates. Nor could they, by sounds or signs, be convinced of their mistake, until Major Putnam, preferring the probable loss of his own life to the loss of the lives of his brave associates, ran through the midst of the flying balls, and prevented the impending catastrophe.

The tender feelings which Major Putnam possessed, taught him to respect an unfortunate foe, and to strive, by every lenient art in his power, to alleviate the miseries of war. For this purpose, he remained on the field until it began to grow dark, employed in collecting such of the enemy as were left wounded, to one place; he gave them all the liquor and little refreshments which he could procure; he furnished to each of them a blanket; he put three blankets under a French sergeant who was badly wounded through the body, and placed him in an easy posture by the side of a tree: the poor fellow could only squeeze his hand with an expressive grasp. "Ah," said Major Putnam, "depend on it, my brave soldier, you shall be brought to the camp as soon as possible, and the same care shall be taken of you as if you were my brother." The next morning Major Rogers was sent to reconnoitre the field, and to bring off the wounded prisoners; but finding the wounded unable to help themselves, in order to save trouble, he despatched every one of them to the world of spirits. Putnam's was not the only heart that bled. The Provin-

cial and British officers, who became acquainted with the fact, were struck with inexpressible horror.

Ticonderoga is surrounded on three sides by water; on the fourth, for some distance, extends a dangerous morass; the remainder was then fortified with a line eight feet high, and planted with artillery. For one hundred yards in front the plain was covered with great trees, cut for the purpose of defence, whose interwoven and sharpened branches projected outwards. Notwithstanding these impediments, the engineer who had been employed to reconnoitre, reported as his opinion, that the works might be carried with musketry. The difficulty and delay of dragging the battering cannon over grounds almost impracticable, induced the adoption of this fatal advice, to which, however, a rumour that the garrison, already consisting of four or five thousand men, was on the point of being augmented with three thousand more, probably contributed. The attack was as spirited in execution as ill-judged in design. The assailants, after having been for more than four hours exposed to a most fatal fire, without making any impression by their reiterated and obstinate proofs of valour, were ordered to retreat. Major Putnam, who had acted as an aid in bringing the Provincial regiments successively to action, assisted in preserving order. It was said that a great number of the enemy were shot in the head, every other part having

been concealed behind their works. The loss on our side was upwards of two thousand killed and wounded. Twenty-five hundred stands of arms were taken by the French. Our army, after sustaining this havoc, retreated with such extraordinary precipitation, that they regained their camp at the southward of Lake George the evening after the action.

The successes in other parts of America made amends for this defeat. Louisbourg, after a vigorous siege, was reduced by the Generals Amherst and Wolfe: Frontenac, a post of importance on the communication between Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence, surrendered to Colonel Bradstreet; and Fort du Quesne, situated at the confluence of the Monongahela with the Ohio, the possession of which had kindled the flame of war that now spread through the four quarters of the globe, was captured by General Forbes.

A few adventures, in which the public interests were little concerned, but which, from their peculiarity, appear worthy of being preserved, happened before the conclusion of the year. As one day Major Putnam chanced to lie with a batteau and five men, on the eastern shore of the Hudson, near the Rapids, contiguous to which Fort Miller stood, his men, on the opposite bank had given him to understand, that a large body of savages were in his rear, and would be on him in a moment. To stay and be sacrificed—to attempt crossing and be shot—

or to go down the falls, with an almost absolute certainty of being drowned, were the sole alternatives that presented themselves to his choice. So instantaneously was the latter adopted, that one man who had rambled a little from the party, was, of necessity, left, and fell a miserable victim to savage barbarity. The Indians arrived on the shore soon enough to fire many balls on the batteau before it could be got under way. No sooner had our batteau-men escaped, by favour of the rapidity of the current, beyond the reach of musket-shot, than death seemed only to have been avoided in one form to be encountered in another not less terrible. Prominent rocks, latent shelves, absorbing eddies, and abrupt descents, for a quarter of a mile, afforded scarcely the smallest chance of escaping without a miracle. Putnam, trusting himself to a good Providence, whose kindness he had often experienced, rather than to men, whose tenderest mercies are cruelty, was now seen to place himself sedately at the helm, and afford an astonishing spectacle of serenity. His companions, with a mixture of terror, admiration and wonder, saw him incessantly changing the course, to avoid the jaws of ruin, that seemed expanded to swallow the whirling boat. Twice he turned it fairly round to shun the rifts of rocks. Amidst these eddies, in which was the greatest danger of its foundering, at one moment the sides were exposed to the fury of the waves; then the stern, and next the bow, glanced ob-

liquely onward, with inconceivable velocity. With not less amazement the savages beheld him sometimes mounting the billows, then plunging abruptly down, at other times skilfully veering from the rocks, and shooting through the only narrow passage; until, at last, they viewed the boat safely gliding on the smooth surface of the stream below. At this sight, it is asserted, that these rude sons of nature were affected with the same kind of superstitious veneration which the Europeans, in the dark ages, entertained for some of their most valorous champions. They deemed the man invulnerable, whom their balls, on his pushing from shore, could not touch; and whom they had seen steering in safety down the rapids that had never before been passed. They conceived it would be an affront against the *Great Spirit* to attempt to kill this favoured mortal with powder and ball, if they should ever see and know him again.

In the month of August five hundred men were employed, under the orders of Majors Rogers and Putnam, to watch the motions of the enemy near Ticonderoga. At South-Bay they separated the party into two equal divisions, and Rogers took a position on Wood-creek, twelve miles distant from Putnam.

Being some time afterwards discovered, they formed a re-union, and concerted measures for returning to Fort Edward. Their march through the woods was in three divisions by

files: the right commanded by Rogers, the left by Putnam, and the centre by Captain D'Ell. The first night they encamped on the banks of Clear river, about a mile from old Fort Ann, which had been formerly built by General Nicholson. Next morning Major Rogers, and a British officer, named Irwin, incautiously suffered themselves, from a spirit of false emulation, to be engaged in firing at a mark. Nothing could have been more repugnant to the military principles of Putnam than such conduct, or reprobated by him in more pointed terms. As soon as the heavy dew which had fallen the preceding night would permit, the detachment moved in one body, Putnam being in front, D'Ell in centre, and Rogers in the rear. The impervious growth of shrubs and under-brush that had sprung up, where the land had been partially cleared some years before, occasioned this change in the order of march. At the moment of moving, the famous French partisan Molang, who had been sent with five hundred men to intercept our party, was not more than one mile and a half distant from them. Having heard the firing, he hastened to lay an ambuscade precisely in that part of the wood most favourable to his project. Major Putnam was just emerging from the thicket, into the common forest, when the enemy rose, and with discordant yells and whoops, commenced an attack on the right of his division. Surprised, but undismayed, Putnam halted, returned the



fire, and passed the word for the other divisions to advance for his support. D'Ell came. The action, though widely scattered, and principally fought between man and man, soon grew general and intensely warm. It would be as difficult as useless to describe this irregular and ferocious mode of fighting. Rogers came not up; but, as he declared afterwards, formed a circular file between our party and Wood-Creek, to prevent their being taken in rear or enfiladed. Successful as he commonly was, his conduct did not always pass without unfavourable imputation. Notwithstanding, it was a current saying in the camp, that "Rogers always *sent*, but Putnam *led*, his men to action," yet, in justice, it ought to be remarked here, that the latter has never been known, in relating the story of this day's disaster, to affix any stigma on the conduct of the former.

Major Putnam, perceiving it would be impracticable to cross the creek, determined to maintain his ground. Inspired by his example, the officers and men behaved with great bravery: sometimes they fought aggregately in open view, and sometimes individually under cover; taking aim from behind the bodies of trees, and acting in a manner independent of each other. For himself, having discharged his fuzee several times, at length it missed fire, while the muzzle was pressed against the breast of a large and well proportioned savage. This *warrior*, availing himself of the indefensible attitude of his

adversary, with a tremendous war-whoop, sprang forward, with his lifted hatchet, and compelled him to surrender; and having disarmed and bound him fast to a tree, returned to the battle.

The intrepid Captains D'Ell and Harman, who now commanded, were forced to give ground for a little distance: the savages, conceiving this to be the certain harbinger of victory, rushed impetuously on, with dreadful and redoubled cries. But our two partisans, collecting a handful of brave men, gave the pursuers so warm a reception as to oblige them, in turn, to retreat a little beyond the spot at which the action had commenced. Here they made a stand. This change of ground occasioned the tree to which Putnam was tied to be directly between the fire of the two parties. Human imagination can hardly figure to itself a more deplorable situation. The balls flew incessantly from either side, many struck the tree, while some passed through the sleeves and skirts of his coat. In this state of jeopardy, unable to move his body, to stir his limbs, or even to incline his head, he remained more than an hour. So equally balanced, and so obstinate was the fight! At one moment, while the battle swerved in favour of the enemy, a young savage chose an odd way of discovering his humour. He found Putnam bound. He might have despatched him at a blow. But he loved better to excite the ter-

rors of the prisoner, by hurling a tomahawk at his head, or rather it should seem his object was to see how near he could throw it without touching him; the weapon struck in the tree a number of times at a hair's breadth distance from the mark. When the Indian had finished his amusement, a French bas-officer, (a much more inveterate savage by nature, though descended from so humane and polished a nation,) perceiving Putnam, came up to him, and, leveling a fuzee within a foot of his breast, attempted to discharge it; it missed fire. Ineffectually did the intended victim solicit the treatment due to his situation, by repeating that he was a prisoner of war. The degenerate Frenchman did not understand the language of honour or of nature: deaf to their voice, and dead to sensibility, he violently, and repeatedly, pushed the muzzle of his gun against Putnam's ribs, and finally gave him a cruel blow on the jaw with the but-end of his piece. After this dastardly deed, he left him.

At length the active intrepidity of D'Ell and Harman, seconded by the persevering valour of their followers, prevailed. They drove from the field the enemy, who left about ninety dead behind them. As they were retiring, Putnam was untied by the Indian who had made him prisoner, and whom he afterwards called master. Having been conducted for some distance from the place of action, he was stripped of his coat, vest, stockings and shoes; loaded with as

many of the packs of the wounded as could be piled on him ; strongly pinioned, and his wrists tied as closely together as they could be pulled with a cord. After he had marched, through no pleasant paths, in this painful manner, for many a tedious mile, the party, who were excessively fatigued, halted to breathe. His hands were now immoderately swelled from the tightness of the ligature ; and the pain had become intolerable. His feet were so much scratched, that the blood dropped fast from them. Exhausted with bearing a burden above his strength, and frantic with torments exquisite beyond endurance, he entreated the Irish interpreter to implore, as the last and only grace he desired of the savages, that they would knock him on the head, and take his scalp at once, or loosen his hands. A French officer, instantly interposing, ordered his hands to be unbound, and some of the packs to be taken off. By this time the Indian, who had captured him, and had been absent with the wounded, coming up, gave him a pair of moccasins, and expressed great indignation at the unworthy treatment his prisoner had suffered.

That savage chief again returned to the care of the wounded, and the Indians, about two hundred in number, went before the rest of the party to the place where the whole were that night to encamp. They took with them Major Putnam, on whom, besides innumerable other outrages, they had the barbarity to inflict a

deep wound with the tomahawk in the left cheek. His sufferings were in this place to be consummated. A scene of horror, infinitely greater than had ever met his eyes before, was now preparing. It was determined to roast him alive. For this purpose they led him into a dark forest, stripped him naked, bound him to a tree, and piled dry brush, with other fuel, at a small distance, in a circle round him. They accompanied their labours, as if for his funeral dirge, with screams and sounds inimitable but by savage voices. Then they set the piles on fire. A sudden shower damped the rising flame. Still they strove to kindle it, until, at last, the blaze ran fiercely round the circle. Major Putnam soon began to feel the scorching heat. His hands were so tied that he could move his body. He often shifted sides as the fire approached. This sight, at the very idea of which all but savages must shudder, afforded the highest diversion to his inhuman tormentors, who demonstrated the delirium of their joy by correspondent yells, dances, and gesticulations. He saw clearly that his final hour was inevitably come. He summoned all his resolution, and composed his mind, as far as the circumstances would admit, to bid an eternal farewell to all he held most dear. To quit the world would scarcely have cost a single pang; but for the idea of home, but for the remembrance of domestic endearments, of the affectionate partner of his soul, and of their beloved



THE SAVAGES ATTEMPTING TO ROAST PUT-  
NAM.—p. 52.

offspring. His thought was ultimately fixed on a happier state of existence, beyond the tortures he was beginning to endure. The bitterness of death, even of that death which is accompanied with the keenest agonies, was, in a manner, past—nature, with a feeble struggle, was quitting its last hold on sublunary things—when a French officer rushed through the crowd, opened a way by scattering the burning brands, and unbound the victim. It was Molang himself—to whom a savage, unwilling to see another human sacrifice immolated, had run and communicated the tidings. That commandant spurned and severely reprimanded the barbarians, whose nocturnal powwas and

hellish orgies he suddenly ended. Putnam did not want for feeling or gratitude. The French commander, fearing to trust him alone with them, remained until he could deliver him in safety into the hands of his master.

The savage approached his prisoner kindly, and seemed to treat him with particular affection. He offered him some hard biscuit; but finding that he could not chew them, on account of the blow he had received from the Frenchman, this more humane savage soaked some of the biscuit in water, and made him suck the pulp-like part. Determined, however, not to lose his captive, he took the moccasins from his feet, and tied them to one of his wrists: then directing him to lie down on his back upon the bare ground, he stretched one arm to its full length, and bound it fast to a young tree; the other arm was extended and bound in the same manner; his legs were stretched apart and fastened to two saplings. Then a number of tall, but slender poles, were cut down, which, with some long bushes, were laid across his body from head to foot: on each side lay as many Indians as could conveniently find lodging, in order to prevent the possibility of his escape. In this disagreeable and painful posture he remained until morning. During this night, the longest and most dreary conceivable, our hero used to relate that he felt a ray of cheerfulness come casually across his mind, and could not even refrain from smiling when he reflected on this

ludicrous group for a painter, of which he himself was the principal figure.

The next day he was allowed his blanket and moccasins, and permitted to march without carrying any pack, or receiving any insult. To allay his extreme hunger, a little bear's meat was given, which he sucked through his teeth. At night the party arrived at Ticonderoga, and the prisoner was placed under the care of a French guard. The savages, who had been prevented from glutting their diabolical thirst for blood, took other opportunities of manifesting their malevolence for the disappointment, by horrid grimaces and angry gestures; but they were suffered no more to offer violence or personal indignity to him.

After having been examined by the Marquis de Montcalm, Major Putnam was conducted to Montreal by a French officer, who treated him with the greatest indulgence and humanity.

At this place were several prisoners. Colonel Peter Schuyler, remarkable for his philanthropy, generosity, and friendship, was of the number. No sooner had he heard of Major Putnam's arrival, than he went to the interpreter's quarters, and inquired whether he had a Provincial major in his custody? He found Major Putnam in a comfortless condition, without coat, waistcoat, or hose; the remnant of his clothing miserably dirty and ragged; his beard long and squalid; his legs torn by thorns and briars; his face gashed with wounds and swol-



len with bruises. Colonel Schuyler, irritated beyond all sufferance at such a sight, could scarcely restrain his speech within limits, consistent with the prudence of a prisoner and the meekness of a Christian. Major Putnam was immediately treated according to his rank, clothed in a decent manner, and supplied with money by that liberal and sympathetic patron of the distressed.

The capture of Frontenac by General Bradstreet afforded occasion for an exchange of prisoners. Colonel Schuyler was comprehended in the cartel. A generous spirit can never be satisfied with imposing tasks for its generosity to accomplish. Apprehensive if it should be known that Putnam was a distinguished partisan, his liberation might be retarded, and knowing that there were officers who, from the length of their captivity, had a claim of priority to exchange, he had, by his happy address, induced the governor to offer, that whatever officer he might think proper to nominate should be included in the present cartel. With great politeness in manner, but seeming indifference as to object, he expressed his warmest acknowledgments to the governor, and said, "There is an old man here, who is a Provincial major, and wishes to be at home with his wife and children; he can do no good here or any where else: I believe your excellency had better keep some of the young men, who have no wife or children to care for, and let the old fellow go

home with me." This justifiable finesse had the desired effect.

At the house of Colonel Schuyler, Major Putnam became acquainted with Mrs. Howe, a widow lady, who had been captured by the Indians. She was still beautiful, though the mother of seven children, all of whom were also captives. Each of her two husbands had suffered death by the savages. A French officer purchased her for four hundred livres. We cannot here detail her interesting history, nor the sufferings from which she was ransomed by that soldier of humanity, Colonel Schuyler. Suffice to say, that he not only purchased her freedom, but gathered to her bosom the scattered children of her love, and put her under the protection of Major Putnam.

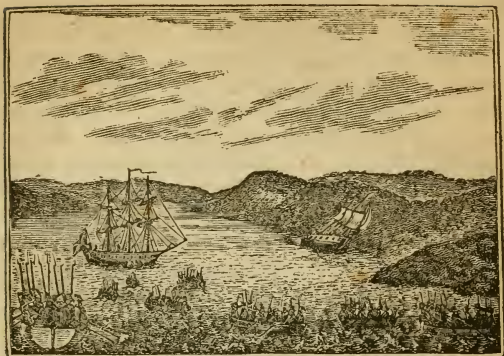
In the long march from captivity, through an inhospitable wilderness, encumbered with five small children, she suffered incredible hardships. Though endowed with masculine fortitude, she was truly feminine in strength, and must have fainted by the way, had it not been for the assistance of Major Putnam. There were a thousand good offices which the helplessness of her condition demanded, and which the gentleness of his nature delighted to perform. He assisted in leading her little ones, and in carrying them over the swampy grounds and runs of water, with which their course was frequently intersected. He mingled his own mess with that of the widow and the fatherless, and

assisted them in supplying and preparing their provisions. Upon arriving within the settlements, they experienced a reciprocal regret at separation, and were only consoled by the expectation of soon mingling in the embraces of their former acquaintances and dearest connexions.

We now arrive at the period when the prowess of Britain, victorious alike by sea and by land, in the new and in the old world, had elevated that name to the zenith of national glory. The conquest of Quebec opened the way for the total reduction of Canada. On this side of the lakes, Amherst having captured the posts of Ticonderoga and Crown-Point, applied himself to strengthen the latter. Putnam, who had been raised to the rank of lieutenant-colonel, and present at these operations, was employed the remainder of this and some part of the succeeding season, in superintending the parties which were detached to procure timber and other materials for the fortification.

In 1760, General Amherst, a sagacious, humane, and experienced commander, planned the termination of the war in Canada, by a bloodless conquest. For this purpose, three armies were destined to co-operate, by different routes, against Montreal, the only remaining place of strength the enemy held in that country. The corps formerly commanded by General Wolfe, now by General Murray, was ordered to ascend the river St. Lawrence; another, un-

der Colonel Haviland, to penetrate by the Isle Aux Noix; and the third, consisting of about ten thousand men, commanded by General Amherst, after passing up the Mohawk river, and taking its course by the Lake Ontario, was to form a junction by falling down the St. Lawrence. In this progress, more than one occasion presented itself to manifest the intrepidity and soldiership of Lieutenant-Colonel Putnam. Two armed vessels obstructed the passage, and prevented the attack on Oswegatchie. Putnam, with one thousand men, in fifty batteaux, undertook to board them. This dauntless officer, ever sparing of the blood of others, as prodigal of his own, to accomplish it with the less loss, put himself with a chosen crew, a beetle and wedges, in the van, with a design to wedge the rudders, so that the vessels should not be able to turn their broadsides, or perform any other manœuvre. All the men in his little fleet were ordered to strip to their waistcoats, and advance at the same time. He promised, if he lived, to join and show them the way up the sides. Animated by so daring an example, they moved swiftly, in profound stillness, as to certain victory or death. The people on board the ships, beholding the good countenance with which they approached, ran one of the vessels on shore, and struck the colours of the other. Had it not been for the dastardly conduct of the ship's company in the latter, who compelled the captain to haul down his ensign, he would



PUTNAM AND HIS MEN BOARDING THE  
FRENCH.—p. 59.

have given the assailants a bloody reception : for the vessels were well provided with spars, nettings, and every customary instrument of annoyance as well as defence.

It now remained to attack the fortress, which stood on an island, and seemed to have been rendered inaccessible by a high abattis of black-ash, that every where projected over the water. Lieutenant-Colonel Putnam proposed a mode of attack, and offered his services to carry it into effect. The General approved the proposal. Our partisan, accordingly, caused a sufficient number of boats to be fitted for the enterprise. The sides of each boat were surrounded with fascines, musket proof, which covered the men

completely. A wide plank, twenty feet in length, was then fitted to every boat in such manner, by having an angular piece sawed from one extremity, that, when fastened by ropes on both sides of the bow, it might be raised or lowered at pleasure. The design was, that the plank should be held erect while the oarsmen forced the bow with the utmost exertion against the abattis; and that afterwards being dropped on the pointed brush, it should serve as a bridge to assist the men in passing over them. Lieutenant-Colonel Putnam having made his dispositions to attempt the escalade in many places at the same moment, advanced with his boats in admirable order. The garrison, perceiving these extraordinary and unexpected machines, waited not the assault, but capitulated. Lieutenant-Colonel Putnam was particularly honoured by General Amherst, for his ingenuity in this invention, and promptitude in its execution. The three armies arrived at Montreal within two days of each other; and the conquest of Canada became complete without the loss of a single drop of blood.

At no great distance from Montreal stands the savage village called Cochnawaga. Here our partizan found the Indian chief who had formerly made him prisoner. That Indian was highly delighted to see his old acquaintance, whom he entertained in his own well-built stone house with great friendship and

hospitality; while his guest did not discover less satisfaction in an opportunity of shaking the brave savage by the hand, and proffering him protection in this reverse of his military fortunes.

When the belligerent powers were considerably exhausted, a rupture took place between Great Britain and Spain, in January, 1762, and an expedition was formed that campaign, under Lord Albemarle, against the Havanna. A body of provincials, composed of five hundred men from the Jerseys, eight hundred from New-York, and one thousand from Connecticut, joined his lordship. General Lyman, who raised the regiment of one thousand men in Connecticut, being the senior officer, commanded the whole: of course, the immediate command of his regiment devolved upon Lieutenant-Colonel Putnam. The fleet that carried these troops sailed from New-York, and arrived safely on the coast of Cuba. There a terrible storm arose, and the transport in which Lieutenant-Colonel Putnam had embarked with five hundred men, was wrecked on a rift of craggy rocks. The weather was so tempestuous, and the surf, which ran mountain-high, dashed with such violence against the ship, that the most experienced seamen expected it would soon part asunder. The rest of the fleet, so far from being able to afford assistance, with difficulty rode out the gale. In this deplorable situation, as the only expedient by which they

could be saved, strict order was maintained, and all those people who best understood the use of tools, instantly employed in constructing rafts from spars, plank, and whatever other materials could be procured. There happened to be on board a large quantity of strong cords, (the same that are used in the whale fishery,) which, being fastened to the rafts, after the first had with inconceivable hazard reached the shore, were of infinite service in preventing the others from driving out to sea, as also in dragging them athwart the billows to the beach; by which means every man was finally saved. With the same presence of mind to take advantage of circumstances, and the same precaution to prevent confusion on similar occasions, how many valuable lives, prematurely lost, might have been preserved as blessings to their families, their friends, and their country! As soon as all were landed, Lieutenant-Colonel Putnam fortified his camp, that he might not be exposed to insult from the inhabitants of the neighbouring districts, or from those of Carthage, who were but twenty-four miles distant. Here the party remained unmolested several days, until the storm had so much abated as to permit the convoy to take them off. They soon joined the troops before the Havanna, who, having been several weeks in that unhealthy climate, already began to grow extremely sickly.\* The

\* Colonel Haviland, an accomplished officer, several times mentioned in these memoirs, who brought to America a regi-



opportune arrival of the provincial re-enforcement, in perfect health, contributed not a little to forward the works, and hasten the reduction of that important place. But the provincials suffered so miserably by sickness afterwards, that very few ever returned to their native land.

Though a general peace among the European powers was ratified in 1763, yet the savages on our western frontiers still continued their hostilities. After they had taken several posts, General Bradstreet was sent, in 1764, with an army, against them. Colonel Putnam, then, for the first time, appointed to the command of a regiment, was on the expedition, as was the Indian chief whom I have several times had occasion to mention as his capturer, at the head of one hundred Cochnawaga warriors. Before General Bradstreet reached Detroit, which the savages invested, Captain D'Ell, the faithful friend and intrepid fellow-soldier of Colonel Putnam, had been slain in a desperate sally. Having been detached with five hundred men, in 1763, by General Amherst, to raise the siege, he found means of throwing the succour into the fort. But the

ment of one thousand Irish veterans, had but seventy men remaining alive when he left the Havanna. Colonel Haviland, during this siege, having once with his regiment engaged and routed five hundred Spaniards, met Colonel Putnam on his return, and said, "Putnam, give me a pinch of snuff." "I never carry any," returned Putnam. "I have always just such luck," cried Haviland; "the rascally Spaniards have shot away my pocket, snuff-box and all."

garrison, commanded by Major Gladwine, a brave and sensible officer, had been so much weakened, by the lurking and insidious mode of war practised by the savages, that not a man could be spared to co-operate in an attack on them. The commandant would even have dissuaded Captain D'Ell from the attempt, on account of the great disparity in numbers; but the latter, relying on the discipline and courage of his men, replied, "God forbid that I should ever disobey the orders of my general," and immediately disposed them for action. It was obstinate and bloody; but the vastly superior number of the savages enabled them to enclose Captain D'Ell's party on every side, and compelled him finally, to fight his way, in retreat, from one stone house to another. Having halted to breathe a moment, he saw one of his bravest sergeants lying at a small distance, wounded through the thigh, and wallowing in his blood; on which he desired some of the men to run and bring the sergeant to the house, but they declined it. Then declaring, that he never would leave so brave a soldier in the field to be tortured by the savages, he ran and endeavoured to help him up—at the instant, a volley of shot dropped them both dead together. The party continued retreating from house to house until they regained the fort; where it was found the conflict had been so sharp, and lasted so long, that only fifty

men remained alive of the five hundred who had sallied.

On the arrival of General Bradstreet, the savages saw that all further efforts in arms would be vain, and accordingly, after many fallacious proposals for a peace; and frequent tergiversations in the negotiation, they concluded a treaty, which ended the war in America.

Colonel Putnam, at the expiration of ten years from his first receiving a commission, after having seen as much service, endured as many hardships, encountered as many dangers, and acquired as many laurels as any officer of his rank, with great satisfaction laid aside his uniform, and returned to his plough. The various and uncommon scenes of war in which he had acted a respectable part, his intercourse with the world, and intimacy with some of the first officers in the army, joined with occasional reading, had not only brought into view whatever talents he possessed from nature, but had extended his knowledge, and polished his manners, to a considerable degree.

On the twenty-second day of March, 1765, the stamp act received the royal assent. It was to take place in America on the first day of November following. This innovation spread a sudden and universal alarm. The political pulse in the provinces, from *Maine* to *Georgia*, throbbed in sympathy. The assemblies, in most of these colonies, that they might

oppose it legally and in concert, appointed delegates to confer together on the subject. This first congress met, early in October, at New-York. They agreed on a declaration of rights and grievances of the colonists; together with separate addresses to the king, lords, and commons of Great Britain. In the mean time, the people had determined, in order to prevent the stamped paper from being distributed, that the stamp-masters should not enter on the execution of their office. That appointment, in Connecticut, had been conferred on Mr. Ingersol, a very dignified, sensible, and learned native of the colony, who, on being solicited to resign, did not, in the first instance, give a satisfactory answer. In consequence of which, a great number of the substantial yeomanry, on horse-back, furnished with provisions for themselves, and provender for their horses, assembled in the eastern counties, and began their march for New-Haven, to receive the resignation of Mr. Ingersol. A junction with another body was to have been formed in Branford. But having learned at Hartford, that Mr. Ingersol would be in town the next day to claim protection from the assembly, they took quarters there, and kept out patrols during the whole night, to prevent his arrival without their knowledge. The succeeding morning they resumed their march, and met Mr. Ingersol in Wethersfield. They told him their business, and he, after some little hesitation, mounted on

a round table, read his resignation.\* That finished, the multitude desired him to cry out "liberty and property" three times; which he did, and was answered by three loud huzzas. He then dined with some of the principal men at a tavern, by whom he was treated with great politeness, and afterwards was escorted by about five hundred horse to Hartford, where he again read his resignation, amidst the unbounded acclamations of the people. I have chosen to style this collection the *yeomanry*, the *multitude*, or the *people*, because I could not use the English word *mob*, which generally signifies a disorderly concurrence of the rabble, without conveying an erroneous idea. It is scarcely necessary to add, that the people, their objects being effected, without offering disturbance, dispersed to their homes.†

\* The curious may be pleased to know that the resignation was expressed in these explicit terms:

"*Wethersfield, September 9th, 1765.*

"I do hereby promise, that I never will receive any stamped papers which may arrive from Europe, in consequence of an act lately passed in the parliament of Great Britain; nor officiate as stamp-master or distributor of stamps, within the colony of Connecticut, either directly or indirectly. And I do hereby notify to all the inhabitants of his majesty's colony of Connecticut (notwithstanding the said office or trust has been committed to me) not to apply to me, ever after, for any stamped paper; *hereby declaring that I do resign the said office*, and execute these PRESENTS of my OWN FREE WILL AND ACCORD, without any equivocation or mental reservation.

"In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand,

"J. INGERSOL."

† To give a trait of the urbanity that prevailed, it may not be amiss to mention a jest that passed in the cavalcade to Hartford, and was received with the most perfect good humour. Mr. Ingersol, who by chance rode a white horse, being asked "What he thought, to find himself attended by such

Colonel Putnam, who instigated the people to these measures, was prevented from attending by accident. But he was deputed soon after, with two other gentlemen, to wait on Governor Fitch on the same subject. The questions of the governor, and answers of Putnam, will serve to indicate the spirit of the times. After some conversation, the governor asked, "What he should do if the stamped paper should be sent to him by the king's authority?" Putnam replied, "lock it up until we shall visit you again." "And what will you do then?" "We shall expect you to give us the key of the room in which it is deposited; and, if you think fit, in order to screen yourself from blame, you may forewarn us, on our peril, not to enter the room." "And what will you do afterwards?" "Send it safely back again." "But if I should refuse admission?" "In such a case, your house will be levelled with the dust in five minutes." It was supposed, that a report of this conversation was one reason why the stamped paper was never sent from New-York to Connecticut.

Such unanimity in the provincial assemblies, and decision in the yeomanry, carried beyond the Atlantic a conviction of the inexpediency of attempting to enforce the new revenue system. The stamp act being repealed, and the

a retinue?" replied, "that he had now a clearer idea than ever he had before conceived of that passage in the Revelation, which describes *death on a pale horse, and hell following him.*"

colonies in a manner quieted, Colonel Putnam continued to labour, afterwards, at farming, without interruption, except, for a little time, by the loss of the first joint of his right thumb from one accident, and the compound fracture of his right thigh from another: that thigh, being rendered nearly an inch shorter than the left, occasioned him to limp in his walk.

The provincial officers and soldiers from Connecticut, who survived the conquest of the Havanna, appointed General Lyman to receive the remainder of their prize money, in England. A company, composed partly of military, and partly of other gentlemen, whose object was to obtain from the crown a grant of land on the Mississippi, also committed to him the negotiation of their affairs. When several years had elapsed in applications, a grant of land was obtained. In 1770, General Lyman, with Colonel Putnam, and two or three others, went to explore the situation. After a tedious voyage, and a laborious passage up the Mississippi, they accomplished their business.

General Lyman came back to Connecticut with the explorers, but soon returned to the Natchez, there formed an establishment, and laid his bones. Colonel Putnam placed some labourers with provisions and farming utensils on his location; but the increasing troubles shortly after ruined the prospect of deriving any advantage from that quarter.

It will ever be acknowledged by those who were best acquainted with facts, and it should be made known to posterity, that the king of England had not, in his extensive dominions, subjects more loyal, more dutiful, or more zealous for his glory, than the Americans; and that nothing short of a melancholy persuasion, that the "measures which for many years had been systematically pursued by his ministers, were calculated to subvert their constitutions," could have dissolved their powerful attachment to that kingdom, which they fondly called their *parent country*. Here, without digression to develop the cause, or describe the progress, it may suffice to observe, the dispute now verged precipitately to an awful crisis. Most considerate men foresaw it would terminate in blood. But rather than suffer the chains, which they believed in preparation, to be riveted, they nobly determined to sacrifice their lives. In vain did they deprecate the infatuation of those transatlantic counsels which drove them to deeds of desperation. Convinced of the rectitude of their cause, and doubtful of the issue, they felt the most painful solicitude for the fate of their country, on contemplating the superior strength of the nation with which it was to contend. America, thinly inhabited, under thirteen distinct colonial governments, could have little hope of success, but from the protection of Providence, and the unconquerable spirit of freedom which pervad-



ed the mass of the people. It is true, since the peace she had surprisingly increased in wealth and population; but the resources of Britain almost exceeded credibility or conception. It is not wonderful, then, that some good citizens, of weaker nerves, recoiled at the prospect; while others, who had been officers in the late war, or who had witnessed, by traveling, the force of Britain, stood aloof. All eyes were now turned to find the men who, possessing military experience, would dare, in the approaching hour of severest trial, to lead their undisciplined fellow-citizens to battle; for none were so stupid as not to comprehend, that want of success would involve the leaders in the punishment of rebellion. Putnam was among the first and most conspicuous who stepped forth. Although the Americans had been, by many who wished their subjugation, indiscreetly as indiscriminately stigmatized with the imputation of cowardice—he felt—he knew for himself, he was no coward; and from what he had seen and known, he believed that his countrymen, driven to the extremity of defending their rights by arms, would find no difficulty in wiping away the ungenerous aspersion. As he happened to be often at Boston, he held many conversations, on these subjects, with General Gage, the British commander-in-chief, Lord Percy, Colonel Sheriff, Colonel Small, and many officers with whom he had formerly served, who were now at the head-

quarters. Being often questioned, "in case the dispute should proceed to hostilities, what part he would really take?" he always answered, "with his country; and that, let whatever might happen, he was prepared to abide the consequence." Being interrogated, "whether *he*, who had been a witness to the prowess and victories of the British fleets and armies, did not think them equal to the conquest of a country which was not the owner of a single ship, regiment, or magazine?" he rejoined, that "he could only say, justice would be on our side, and the event with Providence: but that he had calculated, if it required six years for the combined forces of England and her colonies to conquer such a feeble country as Canada, it would, at least, take a very long time for England alone to overcome her own widely extended colonies, which were much stronger than Canada: that when men fought for every thing dear, in what they believed to be the most sacred of all causes, and in their own native land, they would have great advantages over their enemies, who were not in the same situation; and that, having taken into view all circumstances, for his own part, he fully believed that America would not be so easily conquered by England as those gentlemen seemed to expect." Being once, in particular, asked, "whether he did not seriously believe that a well appointed British army of five thousand veterans could march through the whole

continent of America?" He replied briskly, "No doubt, if they behaved civilly, and paid well for every thing they wanted; but"—after a moment's pause, added,—“if they should attempt it in a hostile manner (though the American men were out of the question) the women, with their ladles and broomsticks, would knock them all on the head before they had travelled half way through.” This was the tenor of these amicable interviews; and thus, as it commonly happens in disputes about future events which depend on opinion, they parted without conviction, no more to meet in a friendly manner, until after the appeal should have been made to Heaven, and the issue confirmed by the sword. In the mean time, to provide against the worst contingency, the militia in the several colonies were sedulously trained; and those select companies, the flower of our youth, which were denominated minutemen, agreeably to the indication of their name, held themselves in readiness to march at a moment's warning.

At length the fatal day arrived, when hostilities commenced. General Gage, in the evening of the 18th of April, 1775, detached from Boston the grenadiers and light infantry of the army, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Smith, to destroy some military and other stores, deposited by the province at Concord. About sunrise the next morning, the detachment, on marching into Lexington, fired on a company

of militia, who had just re-assembled ; for having been alarmed late at night, with reports that the regulars were advancing to demolish the stores, they collected on their parade, and were dismissed with orders to re-assemble at beat of drum. It is established by the affidavits of more than thirty persons who were present, that the first fire, which killed eight of the militia, then beginning to disperse, was given by the British without provocation. The spark of war, thus kindled, ran with unexampled rapidity, and raged with unwonted violence. To repel the aggression, the people of the bordering towns spontaneously rushed to arms, and poured their scattering shot from every convenient station on the regulars, who, after marching to Concord, and destroying the magazine, would have found their retreat intercepted, had they not been re-enforced by Lord Percy, with the battalion companies of three regiments, and a body of marines. Notwithstanding the junction, they were hard pushed, and pursued until they could find protection from their ships. Of the British, two hundred and eighty-three were killed, wounded, and taken. The Americans had thirty-nine killed, nineteen wounded, and two made prisoners.

Nothing could exceed the celerity with which the intelligence flew every where, that blood had been shed by the British troops. The country, in motion, exhibited but one scene of hurry, preparation, and revenge. Putnam, who



FIRST INFORMATION PUTNAM HAS OF THE  
BATTLE OF LEXINGTON.—p. 75.

was ploughing when he heard the news, left his plough in the middle of the field, unyoked his team, and without waiting to change his clothes, set off for the theatre of action. But finding the British retreated to Boston, and invested by a sufficient force to watch their movements, he came back to Connecticut,\* levied a regiment, under authority of the legis-

\* General Putnam was absent only one week from the army at Cambridge; and then, for the purpose of consultation with the Legislature of Connecticut, at that time in session; and at the particular request of that body. Having assisted, by his advice, in the organization of a military force, for the campaign of 1775, he returned immediately to the army before Boston, leaving orders for the troops to follow with as little delay as possible, after the men could be enlisted. (*Editor.*)

lature, and speedily returned to Cambridge.\* He was now promoted to be a Major-General on the Provincial staff, by his colony ; and, in a little time, confirmed by Congress, in the same rank, on the Continental establishment. General Ward, of Massachusetts, by common consent, commanded the whole ; and the celebrated Dr. Warren was made a Major-General.

Not long after this period, the British commander-in-chief found the means to convey a proposal, privately, to General Putnam, that if he would relinquish the rebel party, he might rely upon being made a Major-General on the British establishment, and receiving a great pecuniary compensation for his services. General

\* An article void of foundation, mentioning an interview between General Gage and General Putnam, appeared in the English gazettes, in these words : " General Gage, viewing the American army with his telescope, saw General Putnam in it, which surprised him ; and he contrived to get a message delivered to him, that he wanted to speak to him. Putnam, without any hesitation, waited upon him. General Gage showed him his fortifications, and advised him to lay down his arms. General Putnam replied, he could force his fortifications in half an hour, and advised General Gage to go on board the ships with his troops."

The apprehension of an attack is adduced with much more veri-similitude in M'Fingal, as the reason why General Gage would not suffer the inhabitants to go from the town of Boston, after he had promised to grant permission :

" So Gage of late agreed, you know,  
To let the Boston people go ;  
Yet when he saw, 'gainst troops that brav'd him,  
They were the only guards that sav'd him,  
Kept off that Satan of a *Putnam*,  
From breaking in to maul and mutt'n him,  
He'd too much wit such leagues t' observe,  
And shut them in again to starve."

*M'Fingal*, Canto I.

Putnam spurned at the offer ; which, however, he thought prudent at that time to conceal from public notice.

It could scarcely have been expected, but by those credulous patriots who were prone to believe whatever they ardently desired, that officers assembled from colonies distinct in their manners and prejudices, selected from laborious occupations, to command a heterogeneous crowd of their equals, compelled to be soldiers only by the spur of occasion, should long be able to preserve harmony among themselves, and subordination among their followers. As the fact would be a phenomenon, the idea was treated with mirth and mockery by the friends to the British government. Yet this unshaken embryo of a military corps, composed of militia, minutemen, volunteers, and levies, with a burlesque appearance of multiformity in arms, accoutrements, clothing, and conduct, at last grew into a regular army—an army which, having vindicated the rights of human nature, and established the independence of a new empire, merited and obtained the glorious distinction of the patriot army—the patriot army, whose praises for their fortitude in adversity, bravery in battle, moderation in conquest, perseverance in supporting the cruel extremities of hunger and nakedness, without a murmur or sigh, as well as for their magnanimity in retiring to civil life, at the moment of victory, with arms in their hands, and without any just compensa-

tion for their services, will only cease to be celebrated when time shall exist no more.

Enthusiasm for the cause of liberty, substituted in the place of discipline, not only kept these troops together, but enabled them at once to perform the duties of a disciplined army. Though the commanding officers from the four colonies of New England were in a manner independent, they acted harmoniously in concert. The first attention had been prudently directed towards forming some little redoubts and intrenchments; for it was well known that lines, however slight or untenable, were calculated to inspire raw soldiers with a confidence in themselves. The next care was to bring the live stock from the islands in Boston bay, in order to prevent the enemy, (already surrounded by land,) from making use of them for fresh provisions. In the latter end of May, between two and three hundred men were sent to drive off the stock from Hog and Noddle islands, which are situated on the north-east side of Boston harbour. Advantage having been taken of the ebb-tide, when the water is fordable between the main and Hog island, as it is between that and Noddle island, the design was effected. But a skirmish ensued, in which some of the marines, who had been stationed to guard them, were killed; and as the firing continued between the British water-craft and our party, a re-enforcement of three hundred men, with two pieces of artillery, was ordered



to join the latter. General Putnam took the command, and having gone down on the beach, within conversing distance, and *ineffectually* ordered the people on board an armed schooner to strike, he plied her with shot so furiously, that the crew made their escape, and the vessel was burnt. An armed sloop was likewise so much disabled as to be towed off by the boats of the fleet. Thus ended this affair, in which several hundred sheep, and some cattle, were removed from under the muzzles of the enemy's cannon, and our men, accustomed to stand fire, by being for many hours exposed to it, without meeting with any loss.

The provincial Generals, having received advice that the British commander-in-chief designed to take possession of the heights on the peninsula at Charlestown, detached a thousand men in the night of the 16th of June, under the orders of General Warren, to intrench themselves on one of these eminences, named Bunker Hill. Though retarded by accidents from beginning the work until nearly midnight, yet, by dawn of day, they had constructed a redoubt about eight rods square, and commenced a breast-work from the left to the low grounds; which an insufferable fire from the shipping, floating batteries, and cannon on Copp's Hill, in Boston, prevented them from completing. At mid-day, four battalions of foot, ten companies of grenadiers, ten companies of light infantry, with a proportion of artillery.

commanded by Major-General Howe, landed under a heavy cannonade from the ships, and advanced in three lines to the attack. The light infantry being formed on the right, was directed to turn the left flank of the Americans; and the grenadiers, supported by two battalions, to storm the redoubt in front. Meanwhile, on application, these troops were augmented by the 47th regiment, the 1st battalion of marines, together with some companies of light infantry and grenadiers, which formed an aggregate force of between two and three thousand men.\* But so difficult was it to re-enforce the Americans, by sending detachments across the Neck, which was raked by the cannon of the shipping, that not more than fifteen hundred men were brought into action. Few instances can be produced in the annals of mankind, where soldiers, who never had before faced an enemy, or heard the whistling of a ball, behaved with such deliberate and persevering valour.

General Putnam rode through the line, and ordered that no one should fire till they arrived within eight rods, nor any one till commanded. "Powder was scarce and must not be wasted. They should not fire at the enemy till they saw the white of their eyes, and then

\* The preceding paragraph was copied from a British Register, being the English account of the troops sent to the attack of Bunker Hill, and the disposition of those troops. This account, and others, published at the time, and ascribing the command of the American force to Warren, probably occasioned the historical error on that subject. (*Editor.*)

fire low, take aim at their waistbands. They were all marksmen, and could kill a squirrel at a hundred yards; reserve their fire, and the enemy were all destroyed. Aim at the handsome coats, pick off the commanders." The same orders were reiterated by Prescott at the redoubt, by Pomeroy, Stark, and all the veteran officers.

The enemy were within gunshot of the redoubt; a few of the sharp shooters could not resist the temptation and fired. Prescott was indignant at this contempt of his orders; waving his sword, he swore instant death against the first who disobeyed again, appealed to their well known confidence in him, and promised to give them orders at the proper moment.

The enemy were at eight rods distance, the deadly muskets were levelled, when Prescott commanded his men to take good aim, be sure of their mark, and fire. He was effectually obeyed. The whole front rank was swept away, and many a gallant officer laid low. They were, however, countrymen of those who gave the fire, and received it with the same cool courage with which it was given. Rank succeeded rank, and returned the fire, but the odds was fearful; the Americans were well protected by the works; the efforts and courage of the enemy were in vain, and with surly reluctance they were compelled to retreat.

Warren animated and encouraged the men, and with the rest of the officers, set them an example with his musket; there was scarcely an officer of any grade, except Putnam and Prescott, without one.

Perfect as was the fire of the American infantry, their artillery was as grossly defective in every respect. This arm requires science, experience, and knowledge of position. But the artillery companies were just selected from the infantry, and entirely ignorant of their duty. Callender carried his pieces into action, but his cartridges required adjusting. Totally in violation of military discipline, he left his post without orders, and was retiring to a secure place under cover of the hill, to prepare for firing. Putnam observed this appearance of retreat, and was fired with indignation; he ordered him instantly to his post; Callender remonstrated, but Putnam threatened him with instant death, if he hesitated, and forced him back. His men, however, were disgusted with a part of the service they did not understand, most of them had muskets and mingled in the fight; the pieces were entirely deserted, and the captain relinquished them.

The British had neglected the only manœuvre which would have defeated the enemy, to mount the works and charge with the bayonet. The Americans had scarcely a bayonet to a company, and it must have succeeded. Under cover of the hill they prepared for another onset.

Their fellow soldiers on the right arrived about the time of this attack on the redoubt to within about one hundred yards of the Americans. They were throwing down a fence, when a few marksmen fired on them. Putnam was enraged at this disobedience of an order on which the salvation of the army depended; he rode to the spot, his sword whistling through the air; in his indignation, he threatened to cut down the first who dared to fire again without orders. The discharge from these few muskets, however, drew the fire from the enemy's line, which continued moving on, and when about eight rods from the fence, the fatal order was given; the fire of the Americans mowed them down with the same tremendous severity, as at the redoubt. The officers especially fell victims to their deadly aim.

During this tremendous fire of musketry and roar of cannon, M'Clary's stentorian voice was distinctly heard, animating and encouraging the men, as though he would inspire every ball that sped with his own fire and energy.

The British fired their heaviest volleys of musketry with admirable coolness and regularity, but without aim, at the Americans, and almost every ball passed harmless over them. Their artillery had been stopped by the brick kilns in the low ground, and produced little effect. This wing of the army having covered the ground with their dead, were at length

compelled likewise to retreat; and the huzza of victory re-echoed through the American line.

General Ward had by this time despatched sufficient re-enforcements, but they did not reach the field. The fire across the Neck wore an aspect too terrific for raw troops to venture through it. Putnam flew to the spot to overcome their fears and hurry them on before the enemy returned. He entreated, threatened, and encouraged them; lashing his horse with the flat of his sword, he rode backward and forward across the Neck, through the hottest fire, to convince them there was no danger. The balls however threw up clouds of dust about him, and the soldiers were perfectly convinced that he was invulnerable, but not equally conscious of being so themselves.\* Some of these troops, however, ventured over.

The battalion of artillery under Major Gridley had proceeded but a few hundred rods down the road to Charlestown, when they were halted, and this officer determined not to proceed to the hill, but wait and cover the retreat, which he considered inevitable. He was young and inexperienced, and totally inadequate to the important command which had been conferred on him in compliment to his father, Colonel Gridley. He was confounded with the dangers and difficulties of his situa-

\* The principal fact here is proved by the deposition of Mr. Samuel Bassett; the other circumstances by oral testimony.

tion, and never recovered his self-possession during the day.

While the artillery was halted in this situation, Colonel James Frye, (who was absent from his regiment on duty the day before, but the battle approaching, had found his way to the field,) riding from Charlestown, galloped up to them, and demanded of the senior captain,\* "why this unseasonable halt!" He was astonished at the reply, and ordered them instantly to the field. This veteran also animated their courage by the glorious recollection "this day thirty years since, I was at the taking of Louisbourg when it was surrendered to us; it is a fortunate day for America, we shall certainly beat the enemy."

The artillery proceeded. Gridley joined them; but his aversion to joining in the engagement was invincible, and he ordered them on to Cobble Hill, to fire at the Glasgow and floating batteries. The order was so palpably absurd, with their three pounders, that Captain Trevett absolutely refused obedience, ordered his men to follow him, and marched for the lines.

Major Gridley was sensible his artillery would be hazarded without infantry to cover them. Colonel Mansfield had been ordered with his regiment to re-enforce the troops at Charlestown, but being peremptorily commanded by

\* He was living in 1812, and from whom we have this anecdote.

Major Gridley, whom he considered high military authority, to cover his pieces, he complied, in violation of his orders.

General Putnam left the Neck for Bunker Hill to bring up the re-enforcements. He there found Colonel Gerrish with his regiment and some other scattered troops. The colonel had been a captain in the provincial army of 1756; he was of unwieldy corpulence, and a disposition by far too quiet for a soldier's. He had marched his men rapidly from Cambridge, and unwisely halted them here to rest. The blazing sun and tremendous fire of the enemy combined were far too powerful for the faintness of his military ardour to overcome. The men were disorganized and dispersed on the west side of the hill, and covered by the summit from the fire. Putnam ordered them on to the lines; he entreated and threatened them, and some of the most cowardly he knocked down with his sword, but all in vain. The men complained they had not their officers; he offered to lead them on himself, but the "cannon were deserted, and they stood no chance without them." The battle indeed appeared here in all its horrors. The British musketry fired high, and took effect on this elevated hill, and it was completely exposed to the combined fire from their ships, batteries, and field pieces.

The enemy were by this time organized anew, and were again advancing to the attack. Putnam's duty called him to the lines. At this



time Captain Ford appeared with his company. He served in a regiment under the veteran Lieutenant-Colonel Parker and Major Brooks. Of them he had learned the duties of a soldier. He had already signalized himself at Lexington battle, by killing five of the enemy. His orders were to proceed to the lines and re-enforce the troops; he obeyed, marched unconcerned across the Neck, and was proceeding down Bunker Hill, when Putnam was delighted with an aid so opportune. Callender's deserted cannon were at the foot of the hill; he ordered Captain Ford with his company to draw them into line. The captain remonstrated "his company were totally ignorant of the discipline and employment of artillery." But the general peremptorily persisting in his order, he obeyed; his company moved with the cannon and the general to the rail fence.

The heroic enemy with unwavering step and firm undaunted bravery appeared again before the murderous lines which had already compelled them to retreat. They had nearly the same obstacles to overcome as before. Their cumbrous knapsacks, tall and almost impassable grass, and a torrid sun blazing in face of them, they had to contend against, as well as an enemy every way worthy of them. One new obstacle they had to pass, the dead bodies of their fellow soldiers which covered the ground. But this served rather to stimulate them to still more daring efforts to avenge their fall. The

last of the re-enforcements, a few companies of marines, arrived on the left.

The Americans were now more confident and perfect than before in a manœuvre which had been crowned with success. It was indeed perfectly simple, but equally fatal to the foe. They received orders to reserve their fire till the enemy approached still nearer than before. At six rods only they were permitted to return the fire. The British artillery approached by the narrow road between the tongue of land and Breed's Hill, within three hundred yards of the rail fence, and almost in a line with the redoubt, and opened on the lines to prepare a way for their infantry. The latter commenced a regular and tremendous volley by platoons, and their fire soon became general. But unfortunately for them, though perfect in drill discipline, and regular movements of parade, they were as grossly unskilful in what was a thousand times more important, a knowledge of their weapons. Their aim was too elevated, and the enemy were hidden behind their works. Some of their balls, however, took effect, and a few of the privates fell victims. The brave Major Moore was mortally wounded. Major Buckminster received a ball through the shoulder, and was crippled for life.

To add new horrors to the scene, vast columns of smoke were now observed over Charlestown, and passed to the south over the American lines. General Howe, on his first

advance, had sent word to General Burgoyne and General Clinton, on Copp's Hill, that his left flank was annoyed by musketry from Charlestown, and ordered them to burn it down. A carcass was fired, but fell short near the ferry way; a second fell in the street, and the town was on fire. The conflagration was completed by a detachment of men who landed from the Somerset. The whole town was combustible. The flames ascended to heaven on the lofty spire of the church, and resembled the eruptions of a vast volcano in solemn grandeur and sublimity. The advance of the enemy was not obscured by the smoke from Charlestown; they were in full view of the Americans. Putnam now, with the assistance of Captain Ford's company, opened his artillery on them. He had on this day performed the service of general, engineer, and guide, and he now turned cannonier, with splendid success, and to the highest satisfaction of his surrounding countrymen. Each company of artillery had but twelve cartridges, and these were soon expended. He pointed the cannon, the balls took effect on the enemy, and one case of canister made a lane through them. As in Milton's battle,

“ Foul dissipation followed and forced rout.”

With wonderful courage, however, the enemy closed his ranks, and the fire became general on both sides. The Americans suffered the enemy to approach still nearer than before;

men and officers fell in promiscuous heaps ; whole front ranks of them were swept away.

General Ward was without staff officers to bear his commands, excepting one aid, and a secretary, who performed the duty. During the whole day these were mounted and on full speed between Breed's Hill and head quarters. Loss and neglect of orders were the inevitable consequence. Colonel Gardner's regiment and others who had been posted between Cambridge and Charlestown, to wait further orders, were overlooked. The battle was raging, and no orders arrived. The colonel was a gentleman of rank, had been a member of the legislature, and commanded a regiment of militia, which, marching to Lexington to join in the engagement there, suddenly opened on the British artillery ; being entirely void of cover they dispersed. His gallant soul felt their conduct as a stigma on himself, and he resolved on the earliest opportunity to wipe the spot from his escutcheon. A glorious occasion was before him, and he panted to embrace it—to reap the honours of victory, or death and lasting fame. The latter fate was decreed him. He called to him his officers, and offered to lead them into battle ; most of them, with three hundred of his men, followed him. He led them over Bunker Hill, viewed with unconcern the battle scene on the hill before him, terrible as Mount Sinai, and with glorious anticipations, was descending to the engagement, when a musket ball entered

his groin, and the wound proved mortal. He gave his men his last solemn injunction, to conquer or die, and was carried off the field. He soon met Captain Trevett advancing with his artillery, and an interesting and heroic interview ensued between the colonel and Captain Trevett's second lieutenant, Gardner, his son, a mere youth of nineteen. The son was in agony at the desperate situation of his father, and would have attended him off the ground. But the colonel prohibited this. "He should not be alarmed at his situation, he was engaged in a good cause, and must march on and do his duty." The distracted son obeyed, and his dying father had the consolation to learn that his last injunction and glorious example were not lost; and that his son was worthy of him.

These re-enforcements, with Captain Clark and Captains Chester and Coit, who soon followed with their companies, supplied the places of those who had expended their ammunition and left the ground, and of the detachment sent off with the intrenching tools, who, in contempt of their orders, never returned.

The British had a long time borne the murderous fire of the enemy, but their astonishing fortitude and daring efforts were useless against the insuperable difficulties they encountered. Nearly a thousand of their number had fallen, with an incredible proportion of the bravest officers. The distinguished Colonels Abercombie

and Williams, and Major Spendlove, had purchased fame with their lives.

The gallant Major Small was left standing alone, every one shot down about him. The never erring muskets were levelled at him, and a soldier's fate was his inevitable destiny, had not Putnam at the instant appeared. Each recognized in the other an old friend and fellow soldier; the tie was sacred; Putnam threw up the deadly muskets with his sword, and arrested his fate. He begged his men to spare that officer, as dear to him as a brother. The general's humane and chivalrous generosity excited in them new admiration, and his friend retired unhurt.

The undaunted Howe still led on his men in the hottest of the battle. His friend and volunteer aid, Gordon, and Captain Addison, a descendant from the author of the Spectator, were slain, and almost every other officer of his staff, or near him, was shot. Mortified and indignant at so much blood wasted in vain, he seemed to court an honourable death to hide him from the disgrace of a second defeat by an enemy he despised as peasants and rebels. His life seemed charmed, and he was compelled to follow his army, who again retreated, and left their enemy to taste, a second time, the joys of victory.

The exultation of the Americans was glorious and well deserved, but it was, alas, short-lived. They had leisure to realize the entire hopeless-

ness of their situation. Their ammunition was expended, and they were as destitute of every offensive weapon as the naked savages, their predecessors. Prescott found a few artillery cartridges, which he distributed to his men, and they determined to show a resolute front to the enemy, to club their muskets, and even employ the stones thrown up with the parapet against them. Their only hope, however, was from a want of fortitude in the enemy, and that they had twice this day proved was slender indeed.

General Howe gave his men orders to prepare again to advance. Some of the officers remonstrated, that it would be mere butchery to lead them on again; but the generals, and nearly every officer, were indignant at a distant suspicion of their yielding the victory to these rebels, an undisciplined rabble, of inferior numbers, after all their boasting, and after they had poured out every epithet of contempt against them. To conquer or die was their resolve.

Bloody experience at last opened their eyes to their egregious errors. Their overweening confidence was laid aside, and a calculated, deliberate, and judicious plan of attack adopted. The overloaded knapsacks were relinquished; firing with musketry was prohibited, and a charge with the bayonet resorted to. The attack was to be more concentrated; while the troops at the rail fence were amused by a show of force, the grand effort was to be against the

redoubt and breastwork, and particularly the right flank.

The accomplished and chivalrous General Clinton now joined and brought his splendid talents into the council, and his distinguished gallantry into the field. Immediate and inconceivable was the sensation his appearance produced at this moment of deep despondence. From Copps Hill he had observed with shame and indignation the double rout of his countrymen, and particularly that the two distinguished battalions, the marines and forty-seventh, were staggered and wavering. Without waiting for orders, he threw himself into a boat, passed over, and soon breathed into them his own exalted heroism.

General Howe a third time commanded a forward movement to scale the works, and rush on the enemy with the bayonet. He came to the left to lead on to the redoubt himself. Clinton joined General Pigot and the marines on the left, to turn the right flank of the Americans. The artillery were ordered to advance still farther than before on their old rout, and turn the left of the breastwork to rake the line. General Howe at last became sensible that this was the most vulnerable point and key of his enemy's position.

The Americans made every preparation possible to repel the last desperate effort of the enemy. Putnam again rode to the rear, and exhausted every art and effort to bring on the



scattered re-enforcements. Captain Bayley, only, of Colonel Gerrish's regiment, advanced to the lines, and Captain Trevett now arrived at the rail fence with his pieces.

The enemy stripped off their knapsacks, and many of them their coats; the artillery pushed on by the road on the north, the forty-seventh and marines near the road on the south side of the hill, and the remains of the royal Irish and other regiments, and part of the grenadiers and light infantry, in front. Their past efforts had exhausted the strength and spirit of many of the men, who lingered in the rear, and their gallant officers were compelled to urge them on with their swords. Some of the less resolute fired their pieces, but the great masses obeyed their orders, and with firmness moved on to the charge. They arrived under the fire of the Americans, who improved to advantage their last opportunity for vengeance. Every shot took effect. The gallant Howe at last received a ball in the foot, where, only, like Achilles, he seemed to be vulnerable, but continued to animate his men.

A few only of the Americans had a charge of ammunition remaining. They had sent for a supply in vain; a barrel and a half only were in the magazine. They resorted next to stones, but these served only to betray their weakness, and lent new energy to the foe.

The artillery advanced to the open space between the breastwork and rail fence; this

ground was defended by some brave Essex troops, covered only by scattered trees. With resolution and deadly aim they poured the most destructive volleys on the enemy. The cannon, however, turned the breastwork, enfiladed the line, and sent their balls through the open gateway or sally port, directly into the redoubt, under cover of which the troops at the breastwork were compelled to retire.

The enemy bravely bore the deadly fire, and continually closing his broken ranks, deliberately advanced on every side of the redoubt except the north. They were now under the eastern side of the redoubt and covered from the fire. The Americans retired to the side opposite to take them as they rose. Lieutenant Prescott, a nephew of the colonel, received a ball through the arm; it hung broken and useless by his side. The colonel ordered him to content himself with encouraging his men. But he contrived to load his piece, and was passing by the sally port to rest against the enemy, when a cannon ball cut him to pieces.

Young Richardson, of the royal Irish, was the first to mount the works, and was instantly shot down; the front rank which succeeded shared the same fate. Among these mounted the gallant Major Pitcairn, and exultingly cried "the day is ours," when a black soldier, named Salem,\* shot him through, and he fell. His

\* A contribution was made in the army for this soldier,

agonized son received him in his arms, and tenderly bore him to the boats. It was he who caused the first effusion of blood at Lexington. In that battle his horse was shot under him, while he was separated from his troops; with presence of mind he feigned himself slain; his pistols\* were taken from his holsters, and he was left for dead, when he seized the opportunity and escaped.

The heroic but diminutive Pigot ran up the south-east corner of the redoubt, assisted by a tree left standing there, and desperately led on his men. Troops succeeded troops over the parapet, and Prescott exhausted every resource to repel them, even with the butts of his guns.

But he had now his last great victory to achieve, to which all his past toils, dangers, and privations, were nothing. He had twice conquered the enemy; he had now a more difficult task, to conquer himself, to bend down his lofty soul, and turn his back to the enemy. Perfectly careless of his own life, he had no right to trifle with the lives of his men. It was a sacred deposit they had intrusted to his honour, a bond which he never forfeited. Instead of a useless waste of life, with a "nil desperandum," he quelled his revolting spirit and ordered a retreat.

and he was presented to Washington, as having performed this feat.

\* This trophy afterwards belonged to General Putnam, and yet remains in his family, from whom we have the above anecdote.

General Ward had gratified at last the ardent wishes of the Connecticut troops to join their beloved general. Captains Chester, Clark, and Coit, were on the ground with their troops, and Major Durkee's impatience had before this brought him mounted to the field, to join his old commander and comrade of former wars. Putnam's imagination had already inscribed the victory of Bunker Hill on his coat of arms, when a dark cloud flew across the brilliant prospect. The retreat of the right wing burst upon him.

The gallant veteran Gridley now received a ball through the leg, and was carried off. He had served all night at the intrenchments, and had all day assisted in defending his own works, and proving their excellence.

Prescott's troops fought their way through the surrounding enemy. The veteran Captain Bancroft was charging his piece, a British soldier leaped from the parapet, touching him as he came to the ground, and levelled at him; they fired together; the captain tore him to pieces, and escaped unhurt. One of the men without ammunition perceived Lieutenant Prescott's loaded musket by its deceased master; a Briton obstructed his passage; seizing the loaded musket he brought his antagonist to the ground.

Colonel Bridge, who came with the first detachment, was one of the last to retreat, and was twice severely wounded, in the head and

neck. His lieutenant-colonel, the veteran Parker, who had escaped through the whole war of 1756, in which he had signalized himself, and especially at the desperate siege of Fort Frontinac, received a ball in the thigh, and was left mortally wounded in the redoubt.

The chivalrous Warren lingered to the last. His exalted spirit disdained as a disgrace a retreat the most inevitable. He animated the men to the most desperate daring; and when hope itself had fled, he still disdained to fly. With sullen reluctance he followed his countrymen, and seemed to court that ball from the enemy, which, a few yards from the redoubt, passed through his head, and secured to him the eternal gratitude of his countrymen, and immortal fame throughout the world.

Small here repaid the debt of gratitude he owed the enemy. He recognized Warren, his intimate friend, as he was leaving the redoubt, called to him for God's sake to stand and save his life; he turned and seemed to recognize him, but kept on. Small commanded the men not to fire at him; he threw up the muskets with his sword, but in vain, the fatal ball had sped.

The enemy came on, exhausted by their desperate efforts, under a blazing sun, and broken by the well directed fire. They had not force to employ the bayonet, and were too much broken and mingled with the enemy to fire their pieces. Their right and left wings

were indeed facing each other, with the Americans between ; their fire would have cut down both friend and foe. While they formed themselves anew, the Americans collected, and made a brave and orderly retreat. Putnam put spurs to his foaming horse and threw himself between the retreating force and the enemy, who were but twelve rods from him ;\* his countrymen were in momentary expectation of seeing this compeer of the immortal Warren fall. He entreated them to rally and renew the fight, to finish his works on Bunker Hill, and again give the enemy battle on that unassailable position, and pledged his honor to restore to them an easy victory. Captain Smith, of General Ward's regiment, came with his company to re-enforce, joined in the retreat, and assisted to keep the enemy at bay.

The Americans had retreated about twenty rods before the enemy had time to rally and pour in a destructive fire on them, which destroyed more than they had lost before during the day. Colonel Prescott's adjutant was shot and crippled ; Captain Dow, of his regiment, was also crippled by a wound in the leg, and Captain Bancroft had a part of his hand carried off.

The American left wing were openly con-

\* Deposition of Lyman, then a lieutenant, and present, and Miner, a private in the same company. This is confirmed too by the testimony of a distinguished officer of the revolution, yet living, in 1818, who had served with General Putnam in the French war, and was present, though badly wounded.

gratulating themselves on their victory, when their flank was opened by the retreat of the right. The enemy pressed on them, and they were in their turn compelled to retire. Putnam covered their retreat with his Connecticut troops, and dared the utmost fury of the enemy, in the rear of the whole. These pursued with little ardour, but poured in their thundering volleys, and showers of balls fell like hail around the general.\*

He addressed himself to every passion of the troops, to persuade them to rally, to throw up his works on Bunker Hill, and make a stand, and, as the last resort, threatened them with the eternal disgrace of deserting their general. He took his stand near a field piece, and seemed resolved to brave the foe alone. His troops, however, felt it impossible to withstand the overwhelming force of the British bayonets; they left him. One sergeant only dared to stand by his general to the last; he was shot down, and the enemy's bayonets were just upon the general, before he retired.

General Pomeroy continued to animate the men, and cut down the enemy himself, till a well hove ball shattered his musket. The retreat having commenced, he disdained to turn his back; but with backward step and lowering front shouldered the fragments of his piece

\* This fact we have from a respectable friend, Philip Johnson, Esq., who was present, and living, in 1818, at Newburyport. His honour and veracity is surpassed by no man's,

and carried off his men, encouraging them to pour in their formidable fire on the enemy.

The premature death of Warren, one of the most illustrious patriots that ever bled in the cause of freedom; the veteran appearance of Putnam, collected, yet ardent in action; together with the astonishing scenery and interesting group around Bunker-Hill, rendered this a magnificent subject for the historic pencil. Accordingly Trumbull, formerly an Aid-de-Camp to General Washington, afterwards Deputy-Adjutant-General of the northern army, now an artist of great celebrity in Europe, has finished this picture with that boldness of conception, and those touches of art, which demonstrate the master. Heightened in horror by the flames of a burning town, and the smoke of conflicting armies, the principal scene, taken the moment when Warren fell, represents that hero in the agonies of death, a grenadier on the point of bayoneting him, and Colonel Small, to whom he was familiarly known, arresting the soldier's arms; at the head of the British line, Major Pitcairne is seen falling dead into the arms of his son; and not far distant General Putnam is placed at the rear of our retreating troops, in the light blue and scarlet uniform he wore that day, with his head uncovered, and his sword waving towards the enemy, as it were to stop their impetuous pursuit. In nearly the same attitude he is exhibited by Barlow in that excellent poem, the Vision of Columbus.





BATTLE OF BUNKER-HILL AND DEATH OF  
WARREN.

“There strides bold Putnam, and from all the plains  
Calls the third host, the tardy rear sustains,  
And, 'mid the whizzing deaths that fill the air,  
Waves back his sword, and dares the foll' wing war.”\*

\* The writer of this Essay had occasion of remarking to the poet and the painter, while they were three thousand miles distant from each other, at which distance they had formed and executed the plans of their respective productions, the similarity observable in their descriptions of General Putnam. These *Chefs d'œuvres* are mentioned not with a vain presumption of adding eclat of duration to works which have received the seal of immortality, but because they preserve, in the sister arts, the same illustrious action of our hero. I persuade myself I need not apologize for annexing the beautiful lines from the poem in question, on the death of General Warren.

“There, hapless Warren, thy cold earth was seen :  
There spring thy laurels in immortal green ;  
Dearest of Chiefs that ever press'd the plain,  
In freedom's cause, with early honours, slain,  
Still dear in death, as when in fight you mov'd,  
By hosts applauded and by heav'n approv'd ;  
The faithful muse shall tell the world thy fame,  
And unborn realms resound th' immortal name.”

After this action, the British strongly fortified themselves on the peninsulas of Boston and Charlestown; while the provincials remained posted in the circumjacent country in such a manner as to form a blockade. In the beginning of July, General Washington, who had been constituted by Congress Commander-in-chief of the American forces, arrived at Cambridge, to take the command. Having formed the army into three grand divisions, consisting of about twelve regiments each, he appointed Major-General Ward to command the right wing, Major-General Lee the left wing, and Major-General Putnam the reserve. General Putnam's alertness in accelerating the construction of the necessary defences was particularly noticed and highly approved by the Commander-in-chief.\*

About the 20th of July, the declaration of Congress, setting forth the reasons of their taking up arms, was proclaimed at the head of the several divisions. It concluded with these

\* *Washington* and *Putnam* were unknown to each other till they met at Cambridge. The open, undisguised frankness of the latter, together with his great activity and personal industry, in every thing pertaining to the army, soon attracted the attention of the former; an early intimacy was formed, and a firm friendship established, which continued undisturbed during the whole period they were associated in service. It was not in *Putnam's* nature to be idle: inured to habits of industry himself, no man was better calculated to make others so: and *Washington* observing the great progress that had been made in a short time, and with but few men, in raising a work of defence, said to him—"you seem to have the faculty. General *Putnam*, of infusing your own industrious spirit into all the workmen you employ." (*Editor.*)

patriotic and noble sentiments: "In our own native land, in defence of the freedom that is our birth-right, and which we ever enjoyed until the late violation of it; for the protection of our property, acquired solely by the honest industry of our forefathers and ourselves; against violence actually offered, we have taken up arms. We shall lay them down when hostilities shall cease on the part of the aggressors, and all danger of their being renewed shall be removed, and not before.

"With an humble confidence in the mercies of the supreme and impartial Judge and Ruler of the universe, we most devoutly implore his divine goodness to conduct us happily through this great conflict, to dispose our adversaries to reconciliation on reasonable terms, and, thereby, to relieve the empire from the calamities of civil war."

As soon as these memorable words were pronounced to General Putnam's division, which he had ordered to be paraded on Prospect-Hill, they shouted in three huzzas aloud, Amen! whereat (a cannon from the fort being fired as a signal) the new *Standard* lately sent from Connecticut, was suddenly seen to rise and unroll itself to the wind. On one side was inscribed, in large letters of gold, "AN APPEAL TO HEAVEN," and on the other were delineated the armorial bearings of Connecticut, which, without supporters or crest, consist, unostentatiously, of *three Vines*; with this motto, "*Qui*

*transtulit, sustinet ;*”\* alluding to the pious confidence our forefathers placed in the protection of Heaven, on those three allegorical scions—KNOWLEDGE—LIBERTY—RELIGION—which they had been instrumental in transplanting to America.

The strength of position on the enemy's part, and want of ammunition on ours, prevented operations of magnitude from being attempted. Such diligence was used in fortifying our camps, and such precaution adopted to prevent surprise, as to ensure tranquillity to the troops during the winter. In the spring, a position was taken so menacing to the enemy, as to cause them, on the 17th of March, 1776, to abandon Boston, not without considerable precipitation and dereliction of royal stores.†

\* Literally, “*He who transplanted them will support them.*”

† In the expectation that the flower of the British troops would be employed against the Heights of Dorchester, (which had been taken possession of by the Americans on the night of the 4th of March, 1776,) General Washington had concerted a plan for availing himself of that occasion, to attack the town of Boston itself. Four thousand chosen men were held in readiness to embark at the mouth of Cambridge river, on a signal to be given, if the garrison should appear to be so weakened by the detachment made from it as to justify an assault. These troops were to embark in two divisions, the first to be led by Brigadier-General Sullivan, the second by Brigadier-General Greene, and the whole to be under the command of Major-General Putnam. The boats were to be preceded by three floating batteries, which were to keep up a heavy fire on that part of the town where the troops were to land. It was proposed that the first division should land at the powder-house, and gain possession of Beacon Hill; the second at Barton's Point, or a little south of it, and after securing that post, to join the other division, force the enemy's works, and open the

As a part of the hostile fleet lingered for some time in Nantasket-Road, about nine miles below Boston, General Washington continued himself in Boston, not only to see the coast entirely clear, but also to make many indispensable arrangements. His Excellency, proposing to leave Major-General Ward, with a few regiments, to finish the fortifications intended as a security against an attack by water, in the mean time despatched the greater part of the army to New York, where it was most probable the enemy would make a descent. Upon the sailing of a fleet with troops in the month of January, Major-General Lee had been sent to the defence of that city; who, after having caused some works to be laid out, proceeded to follow that fleet to South Carolina. The Commander-in-chief was now exceedingly solicitous that these works should be completed as soon as possible, and accordingly gave the following

*“ Orders and Instructions for Major-General Putnam.*

“As there are the best reasons to believe that the enemy’s fleet and army, which left Nantasket-Road last Wednesday evening, are bound to New York, to endeavour to possess that important post, and, if possible, to secure the communication by Hudson’s river to Canada, it must be our care to prevent them from

gates in order to give admission to the troops from Roxbury.  
(*Editor.*)

accomplishing their designs. To that end I have detached Brigadier-General Heath, with the whole body of riflemen, and five battalions of the Continental army, by the way of Norwich, in Connecticut, to New York. These, by an express arrived yesterday from General Heath, I have reason to believe, are in New York. Six more battalions, under General Sullivan, march this morning by the same route, and will, I hope, arrive there in eight or ten days at farthest. The rest of the army will immediately follow in divisions, leaving only a convenient space between each division, to prevent confusion, and want of accommodation upon their march. You will, no doubt, make the best despatch in getting to New York. Upon your arrival there, you will assume the command, and immediately proceed in continuing to execute the *plan* proposed by Major-General Lee, for fortifying that city, and securing the passes of the East and North rivers. If, upon consultation with the Brigadiers General and Engineers, any alteration in that *plan* is thought necessary, you are at liberty to make it: cautiously avoiding to break in too much upon his main design, unless where it may be apparently necessary so to do, and that by the general voice and opinion of the gentlemen above mentioned.

“You will meet the Quarter-Master-General, Colonel Mifflin, and Commissary-General,\* at

\* Colonel Joseph Trumbull, eldest son to the Governor of that name.

New York. As these are both men of excellent talents in their different departments, you will do well to give them all the authority and assistance they require: and should a council of war be necessary, it is my direction they assist at it.

“*Your long service and experience* will, better than my particular directions at this distance, point out to you the works most proper to be first raised; and your perseverance, activity, and zeal, will lead you, without my recommending it, to exert every *nerve* to disappoint the enemy’s designs.

“Devoutly praying that the POWER which has hitherto sustained the American arms, may continue to bless them with the divine protection, I bid you—FAREWELL.

“Given at Head-Quarters, in Cambridge, this twenty-ninth of March, 1776.

“G. WASHINGTON.”

Invested with these commands, General Putnam travelled by long and expeditious stages to New York. His first precaution, upon his arrival, was to prevent disturbance, or surprise in the night season. With these objects in view, after posting the necessary guards, he issued his orders.\* He instituted, likewise,

\* GENERAL ORDERS.

“*Head-Quarters, New York, April 5, 1776.*

“The soldiers are strictly enjoined to retire to their barracks and quarters at tattoo-beating, and to remain there until the reveille is beat.

other wholesome regulations to meliorate the police of the troops, and to preserve the good agreement that subsisted between them and the citizens.

Notwithstanding the war had now raged, in other parts, with unaccustomed severity for nearly a year, yet the British ships at New York, one of which had once fired upon the town to intimidate the inhabitants, found the means of being supplied with fresh water and provisions. General Putnam resolved to adopt effectual measures for putting a period to this intercourse, and accordingly expressed his prohibition\* in the most pointed terms.

Nearly at the same moment, a detachment of

“Necessity obliges the General to desire the inhabitants of the city to observe the same rule, as no person will be permitted to pass any sentry after this night, without the countersign.

“The inhabitants, whose business require it, may know the countersign, by applying to any of the Brigade-Majors.”

#### \* PROHIBITION.

“*Head-Quarters, New York, April 8, 1776.*”

“The General informs the inhabitants, that it is become absolutely necessary that all communication between the ministerial fleet and the shore, should be immediately stopped; for that purpose he has given positive orders, the ships should no longer be furnished with provisions. Any inhabitants, or others, who shall be taken, that have been on board, after the publishing this order, or near any of the ships, or going on board, will be considered as enemies, and treated accordingly.

“All boats are to sail from Beekman slip. Captain James Alner is appointed inspector, and will give permits to oystermen. It is ordered and expected that none attempt going without a pass.

“ISRAEL PUTNAM,

“Major-General in the Continental army, and commander-in-chief of the forces in New York.”



a thousand continentals was sent to occupy Governor's Island, a regiment to fortify Red Hook, and some companies of riflemen to the Jersey shore. Of two boats, belonging to two armed vessels, which attempted to take on board fresh water from the watering place on Staten Island, one was driven off by the riflemen, with two or three seamen killed in it, and the other captured with thirteen. A few days afterwards, Captain Vandeput, of the *Asia* man of war, the senior officer of the ships on this station, finding the intercourse with the shore interdicted, their limits contracted, and that no good purposes could be answered by remaining there, sailed, with all the armed vessels, out of the harbour. These arrangements and transactions, joined to an unremitting attention to the completion of the defences, gave full scope to the activity of General Putnam, until the arrival of General Washington, which happened about the middle of April.

The Commander-in-chief, in his first public orders, "*complimented the officers who had successively commanded at New York, and returned his thanks to them, as well as to the officers and soldiers under their command, for the many works of defence which had been so expeditiously erected: at the same time he expressed an expectation that the same spirit of zeal for the service would continue to animate their future conduct.*" Putnam, who was then the only Major-General with the main army,

had still a chief agency in forwarding the fortifications, and, with the assistance of the Brigadiers Spencer and Lord Stirling, in assigning to the different corps their alarm posts.

Congress having intimated a desire of consulting with the Commander-in-chief, on the critical posture of affairs, his Excellency repaired to Philadelphia accordingly, and was absent from the twenty-first of May, until the sixth of June. General Putnam, who commanded in that interval, had it in charge to open all letters directed to General Washington, *on public service*, and, if important, after regulating his conduct by their contents, to forward them by express; to expedite the works then erecting; to begin others which were specified; to establish signals for communicating an alarm; to guard against the possibility of surprise; to secure well the powder magazine; to augment, by every means in his power, the quantity of cartridges; and to send Brigadier-General Lord Stirling to put the posts in the Highlands into a proper condition of defence. He had also *a private and confidential instruction*, to afford whatever aid might be required by the provincial congress of New-York, for apprehending certain of their disaffected citizens; and as it would be most convenient to take the detachment for this service from the troops on Long Island, under the command of Brigadier-General Greene, it was recommended that this officer should be advised of the plan,

and that the execution should be conducted with secrecy and celerity, as well as with decency and good order. In the records of the army, are preserved the daily orders which were issued in the absence of the Commander-in-chief, who, on his return, was not only satisfied that the works had been prosecuted with all possible despatch, but also that the other duties had been properly discharged.

It was the latter end of June, when the British fleet, which had been at Halifax, waiting for re-enforcements from Europe, began to arrive at New-York. To obstruct its passage, some marine preparations had been made. General Putnam, to whom the direction of the whale-boats, fire-rafts, flat-bottomed boats, and armed vessels, was committed, afforded his patronage to a project for destroying the enemy's shipping by explosion. A *machine*, altogether different from any thing hitherto devised by the art of man, had been invented by Mr. David Bushnell,\* for *sub-marine navigation*,

\* David Bushnell, A. M., of Saybrook, in Connecticut, invented several other machines for the annoyance of shipping; these, from accidents, not militating against the philosophical principles on which their success depended, only partially succeeded. He destroyed a vessel in the charge of Commodore Symmonds, whose report to the Admiral was published. One of his kegs also demolished a vessel near the Long Island shore. About Christmas, 1777, he committed to the Delaware a number of kegs, destined to fall among the British fleet at Philadelphia; but his squadron of kegs, having been separated and retarded by the ice, demolished but a single boat. This catastrophe, however, produced an alarm, unprecedented in its nature and degree; which has been so happily described in the subsequent song, by the Hon. Francis Hopkinson, that the

which was found to answer the purpose perfectly, of rowing horizontally at any given depth under water, and of rising or sinking at pleasure. To *this machine*, called the Ame-

event it celebrates will not be forgotten, so long as mankind shall continue to be delighted with works of humour and taste.

THE BATTLE OF THE KEGS.—*A Song.*

[*Tune, Moggy Lawder.*]

Gallants, attend, and hear a friend  
 Thrill forth harmonious ditty :  
 Strange things I'll tell, which late befell  
 In Philadelphia city.

'Twas early day, as poets say,  
 Just when the sun was rising,  
 A soldier stood on log of wood,  
 And saw a sight surprising.

As in a maze he stood to gaze,  
 The truth can't be denied, Sir,  
 He spied a score of kegs or more,  
 Come floating down the tide, Sir.

A sailor, too, in jerkin blue,  
 The strange appearance viewing,  
 First damn'd his eyes, in great surprise,  
 Then said—"Some mischief's brewing.

These kegs now hold the rebels bold,  
 Pack'd up like pickled herring ;  
 And they're come down t' attack the town  
 In this new way of ferry'ng."

The soldier flew ; the sailor too ;  
 And, 'scar'd almost to death, Sir,  
 Wore out their shoes to spread the news,  
 And ran till out of breath, Sir.

Now up and down, throughout the town,  
 Most frantic scenes were acted ;  
 And some ran here, and some ran there,  
 Like men almost distracted.

Some fire cried, which some denied,  
 But said the earth had quaked :  
 And girls and boys, with hideous noise,  
 Ran through the town half naked.

rican Turtle, was attached *a magazine of powder*, which it was intended to be fastened under the bottom of a ship, with a driving screw, in such sort, that the same stroke which disengaged it from the machine, should put the internal clockwork in motion. 'This being done,

Sir William\* he, snug as a flea,  
Lay all this time a snoring;  
Nor dreamt of harm, as he lay warm  
In bed with Mrs. L\*r\*ng.

Now in a fright, he starts upright,  
Awak'd by such a clatter:  
He rubs both eyes, and boldly cries,  
"For God's sake, what's the matter?"

At his bedside he then espied  
Sir Erskinet† at command, Sir;  
Upon one foot he had one boot,  
And t'other in his hand, Sir.

"Arise! arise!" Sir Erskine cries;  
"The rebels—more's the pity—  
Without a boat, are all on float,  
And rang'd before the city.

"The motley crew, in vessels new,  
With Satan for their guide, Sir,  
Pack'd up in bags, or wooden kegs,  
Come driving down the tide, Sir:

"Therefore prepare for bloody war;  
These kegs must all be routed,  
Or surely we despis'd shall be,  
And British courage doubted."

The Royal band now ready stand,  
All rang'd in dread array, Sir,  
With stomachs stout, to see it out,  
And make a bloody day, Sir.

The cannons roar from shore to shore,  
The small arms make a rattle:  
Since wars began, I'm sure no man  
E'er saw so strange a battle.

\* *Sir William Howe.*

† *Sir William Erskine.*

the ordinary operation of a gun-lock at the distance of half an hour, an hour, or any determinate time, would cause the powder to explode, and leave the effects to the common laws of nature. The simplicity, yet combination discovered in the mechanism of this wonderful machine, were acknowledged by those skilled in physics, and particularly hydraulics, to be not less ingenious than novel. The inventor, whose constitution was too feeble to permit him to perform

The rebel\* vales, the rebel dales,  
With rebel trees surrounded,  
The distant woods, the hills and floods,  
With rebel echoes sounded.

The fish below swam to and fro,  
Attack'd from every quarter :  
" Why sure," thought they, " the Devil's to pay  
Mong'st folks above the water."

The kegs, 'tis said, though strongly made  
Of rebel staves and hoops, Sir,  
Could not oppose their pow'rful foes,  
The conqu'ring British troops, Sir.

From morn to night those men of might,  
Display'd amazing courage :  
And when the sun was fairly down,  
Retir'd to sup their porridge.

An hundred men, with each a pen,  
Or more, upon my word, Sir,  
It is most true, would be too few  
Their valour to record, Sir.

Such feats did they perform that day,  
Upon those wicked kegs, Sir,  
That years to come, if they get home,  
They'll make their boasts and brags, Sir.

Mr. Bushnell, having been highly recommended for his talents by President Stiles, General Parsons, and some other gentlemen of science, was appointed a captain in the corps of sappers and miners : in which capacity he continued to serve with that corps until the conclusion of the war.

\* *The British officers were so fond of the word rebel, that they often applied it most absurdly.*

the labour of rowing the Turtle, had taught his brother to manage it with perfect dexterity; but unfortunately his brother fell sick of a fever just before the arrival of the fleet. Recourse was therefore had to a sergeant in the Connecticut troops; who, having received whatever instructions could be communicated to him in a short time, went, too late in the night, with all the apparatus, under the bottom of the Eagle, a sixty-four gun ship, on board of which the British Admiral, Lord Howe, commanded. In coming up, the screw that had been calculated to perforate the copper sheathing, unluckily struck against some iron plates where the rudder is connected with the stern. This accident, added to the strength of the tide which prevailed, and the want of adequate skill in the sergeant, occasioned such delay, that the dawn began to appear, whereupon he abandoned the magazine to chance, and after gaining a proper distance, for the sake of expedition, rowed on the surface towards the town. General Putnam, who had been on the wharf anxiously expecting the result, from the first glimmering of light, beheld the machine near Governor's Island, and sent a whale-boat to bring it on shore. In about twenty minutes afterwards the magazine exploded, and blew a vast column of water to an amazing height in the air. As the whole business had been kept an inviolable secret, he was not a little diverted with the various conjectures, whether this stupendous noise was

produced by a bomb, a meteor, a water-spout, or an earthquake. Other operations of a most serious nature rapidly succeeded, and prevented a repetition of the experiment.

On the twenty-second day of August, the van of the British landed on Long Island, and was soon followed by the whole army, except one brigade of Hessians, a small body of British, and some convalescents, left on Staten Island. Our troops on Long Island had been commanded during the summer by General Greene, who was now sick; and General Putnam took the command but two days before the battle of Flatbush. The instructions to him, pointing in the first place to decisive expedients for suppressing the scattering, unmeaning, and wasteful fire of our men, contained regulations for the service of the guards, the brigadiers, and the field-officers of the day; for the appointment and encouragement of proper scouts, as well as for keeping the men constantly at their posts; for preventing the burning of buildings, except it should be necessary for military purposes, and for preserving private property from pillage and destruction. To these regulations were added, in a more diffuse, though not less spirited and professional style, reflections on the distinction of an army from a mob; with exhortations for the soldiers to conduct themselves manfully in such a cause, and for their commander to oppose the enemy's approach with detachments of his best troops; while he should



endeavour to render their advance more difficult by constructing abattis, and to entrap their parties by forming ambuscades. General Putnam was within the lines, when an engagement took place on the 27th, between the British army and our advanced corps, in which we lost about a thousand men in killed and missing, with the Generals Sullivan and Lord Stirling made prisoners. But our men, though attacked on all sides, fought with great bravery; and the enemy's loss was not light.

The unfortunate battle of Long Island, the masterly retreat from thence, and the actual passage of part of the hostile fleet in the East river, above the town, preceded the evacuation of New-York. A promotion of four major-generals, and six brigadiers, had previously been made by Congress. After the retreat from Long Island, the main army, consisting, for the moment, of sixty battalions, of which twenty were Continental, the residue levies and militia, was, conformably to the exigencies of the service, rather than to the rules of war, formed into fourteen brigades; Major-General Putnam commanded the right grand division of five brigades, the Majors-General Spencer and Greene the centre of six brigades, and Major-General Heath the left, which was posted near Kingsbridge, and composed of two brigades. The whole never amounted to twenty thousand effective men; while the British and German forces, under Sir William Howe, exceeded

twenty-two thousand : indeed, the minister had asserted in parliament that they would consist of more than thirty thousand. Our two centre divisions, both commanded by General Spencer, in the sickness of General Greene, moved towards Mount Washington, Harlaem Heights, and Horn's Hook, as soon as the final resolution was taken in a council of war, on the twelfth of September, to abandon the city. That event, thus circumstanced, took effect a few days after.

On Sunday, the fifteenth, the British, after sending three ships of war up the North River, to Bloomingdale, and keeping up, for some hours, a severe cannonade on our lines, from those already in the East River, landed in force at Turtle Bay. Our new levies, commanded by a state brigadier-general, fled without making resistance. Two brigades of General Putnam's division, ordered to their support, notwithstanding the exertion of their brigadiers, and of the commander-in-chief himself, who came up at the instant, conducted themselves in the same shameful manner. His excellency then ordered the Heights of Harlaem, a strong position, to be occupied. Thither the forces in the vicinity, as well as the fugitives, repaired. In the mean time General Putnam, with the remainder of his command, and the ordinary out-posts, was in the city. After having caused the brigades to begin their retreat by the route of Bloomingdale, in order to

avoid the enemy, who were then in the possession of the main road leading to King's-bridge, he galloped to call off the pickets and guards. Having myself been a volunteer in his division, and acting adjutant to the last regiment that left the city, I had frequent opportunities, that day, of beholding him, for the purpose of issuing orders, and encouraging the troops, flying, on his horse covered with foam, wherever his presence was most necessary. Without his extraordinary exertions, the guards must have been inevitably lost, and it is probable the entire corps would have been cut in pieces.—When we were not far from Bloomingdale, an aid-de-camp came from him at full speed, to inform that a column of British infantry was descending upon our right. Our rear was soon fired upon, and the colonel of our regiment, whose order was just communicated for the front to file off to the left, was killed on the spot. With no other loss we joined the army, after dark, on the Heights of Harlaem.

Before our brigades came in, we were given up for lost by all our friends. So critical indeed was our situation, and so narrow the gap by which we escaped, that, the instant we had passed, the enemy closed it by extending their line from river to river. Our men, who had been fifteen hours under arms, harassed by marching and countermarching, in consequence of incessant alarms, exhausted as they were by heat and thirst, (for the day proved insupport-

ably hot, and few or none had canteens, inso-much, that some died at the brooks where they drank,) if attacked, could have made but feeble resistance.

If we take into consideration the debilitating sickness which weakened almost all our troops, the hard duty by which they were worn down in constructing numberless defences, the continual want of rest they had suffered since the enemy landed, in guarding from nocturnal surprise, the despondency infused into their minds by an insular situation, and a consciousness of inferiority to the enemy in discipline, together with the disadvantageous terms upon which, in their state of separation, they might have been forced to engage, it appears highly probable that day would have presented an easy victory to the British. On the other side, the American commander-in-chief had wisely countenanced an opinion, then universally credited, that our army was three times more numerous than it was in reality. It is not a subject for astonishment, that the British, ignorant of the existing circumstances, imposed upon as to the numbers by reports, and recollecting what a few brave men, slightly intrenched, had performed at Bunker Hill, should proceed with great circumspection. For their reproaches, that the rebels, as they affected to style us, loved digging better than fighting, and that they earthed themselves in holes like foxes, but ill concealed at the bottom of their own

hearts the profound impression that action had made. Cheap and contemptible as we had once seemed in their eyes, it had taught them to hold us in some respect. This respect, in conjunction with a fixed belief, that the enthusiastic spirit of our opposition must soon subside, and that the inexhaustible resources of Britain would ultimately triumph, without leaving any thing to chance, (not the avarice or treachery of the British general, as the factious of his own nation wished to insinuate,) retarded their operation, and afforded us leisure to rescue from annihilation the miserable relics of an army, hastening to dissolution by the expiration of enlistments, and the country itself from irretrievable subjugation. IN TRUTH, WE ARE NOT LESS INDEBTED TO THE MATTOCK AT ONE PERIOD, THAN TO THE MUSKET AT ANOTHER, FOR OUR POLITICAL SALVATION. It required great talents to determine when one or the other was most profitably to be employed. I am aware how fashionable it has become to compare the American commander-in-chief, for the prudence displayed in those dilatory and defensive operations, so happily prosecuted in the early stages of the war, to the illustrious Roman, who acquired immortality in restoring the commonwealth *by delay*. Advantageous and flattering as the comparison at first appears, it will be found, on examination, to stint the American Fabius to the smaller moiety of his merited fame. Did HE

not, in scenes of almost unparalleled activity, discover specimens of transcendent abilities; and might it not be proved, to professional men, that boldness in council, and rapidity in execution, were, at least, equally with prudent procrastination, and the quality of not being compelled to action, attributes of his military genius? *This*, however, was an occasion, as apparent as pressing, for attaining his object *by delay*. From that he had every thing to gain, nothing to lose. Yet there were not wanting *politicians*, AT THIS VERY TIME, who querulously blamed these *Fabian* measures, and loudly clamoured that the immense labour and expense bestowed on the fortification of New-York, had been thrown away; that if we could not face the enemy *there* after so many preparations, we might as well relinquish the contest at once, for we could nowhere make a stand; and that if General Washington, with an army of sixty thousand men, strongly intrenched, declined fighting with Sir William Howe, who had little more than one third of that number, it was not to be expected he would find any other occasion that might induce him to engage. But General Washington, content to suffer a temporary sacrifice of personal reputation, for the sake of securing a permanent advantage to his country, and regardless of those idle clamours for which he had furnished materials, by making his countrymen, in order the more effectually

to make his enemy believe his force much greater than it actually was, inflexibly pursued his system, and gloriously demonstrated how poor and pitiful, in the estimation of A GREAT MIND, are the censorious strictures of those novices in war and politics, who, with equal rashness and impudence, presume to decide dogmatically on the merit of plans they could neither originate or comprehend!

That night our soldiers, excessively fatigued by the sultry march of the day, their clothes wet by a severe shower of rain that succeeded towards the evening, their blood chilled by the cold wind that produced a sudden change in the temperature of the air, and their hearts sunk within them by the loss of baggage, artillery, and works in which they had been taught to put great confidence, lay upon their arms, covered only by the clouds of an uncomfortable sky. To retrieve our disordered affairs, and prevent the enemy from profiting by them, no exertion was relaxed, no vigilance remitted, on the part of our higher officers. The regiments which had been least exposed to fatigue that day, furnished the necessary pickets to secure the army from surprise. Those whose military lives had been short and unpractised, felt enough besides lassitude of body to disquiet the tranquillity of their repose. Nor had those who were older in service, and of more experience, any subject for consolation. The warmth of enthusiasm seemed to be extin-

guished. The force of discipline had not sufficiently occupied its place to give men a dependence upon each other. We were apparently about to reap the bitter fruits of that jealous policy, which some leading men, with the best motives, had sown in our federal councils, when they caused the mode to be adopted, for carrying on the war by detachments of militia, from apprehension that an established continental army, after defending the country against foreign invasion, might subvert its liberties themselves. Paradoxical as it will appear, it may be profitable to be known to posterity, that while our very existence as an independent people was in question, the patriotic jealousy for the safety of our future *freedom* had been carried to such a virtuous but dangerous excess, as well nigh to preclude the attainment of our independence. Happily that limited and hazardous system soon gave room to one more enlightened and salutary. This may be attributed to the reiterated arguments, the open remonstrances, and the confidential communications of the commander-in-chief; who, though not apt to despair of the republic, on this occasion expressed himself in terms of unusual despondency. He declared, in his letters, that he found, to his utter astonishment and mortification, that no reliance could be placed on a great proportion of his present troops, and that, unless efficient measures for establishing a permanent



force should be speedily pursued, we had every reason to fear the final ruin of our cause.

Next morning several parties of the enemy appeared upon the plains in our front. On receiving this intelligence, General Washington rode quickly to the outposts, for the purpose of preparing against an attack, if the enemy should advance with that design. Lieutenant-Colonel Knowlton's rangers, a fine selection from the eastern regiments, who had been skirmishing with an advanced party, came in, and informed the general that a body of British were under cover of a small eminence at no considerable distance. His excellency, willing to raise our men from their dejection by the splendour of some little success, ordered Lieutenant-Colonel Knowlton, with his rangers, and Major Leitch, with three companies of Weedon's regiment of Virginians, to gain their rear; while appearances should be made of an attack in front. As soon as the enemy saw the party sent to decoy them, they ran precipitately down the hill, took possession of some fences and bushes, and commenced a brisk firing at long shot. Unfortunately Knowlton and Leitch made their onset rather in flank than in rear. The enemy changed their front, and the skirmish at once became close and warm. Major Leitch\* having received three balls through his side, was

\* Major Leitch, after languishing some days, died of a locked jaw.

soon borne from the field ; and Colonel Knowlton, who had distinguished himself so gallantly at the battle of Bunker-Hill, was mortally wounded immediately after. Their men, however, undaunted by these disasters, stimulated with the thirst of revenge for the loss of their leaders, and conscious of acting under the eye of the Commander in-chief, maintained the conflict with uncommon spirit and perseverance. But the general seeing them in need of support, advanced part of the Maryland regiments of Griffith and Richardson, together with some detachments from such eastern corps as chanced to be most contiguous to the place of action. Our troops this day, without exception, behaved with the greatest intrepidity. So bravely did they repulse the British, that Sir William Howe moved his *reserve*, with two field pieces, a battalion of Hessian grenadiers, and a company of Chasseurs, to succour his retreating troops. General Washington, not willing to draw on a general action, declined pressing the pursuit. In this engagement were the second and third battalions of light infantry, the forty-second British regiment, and the German Chasseurs, of whom eight officers, and upwards of seventy privates, were wounded, and our people buried nearly twenty, who were left dead on the field. We had about forty wounded : our loss in killed, except of two valuable officers, was very considerable.

An advantage,\* so trivial in itself, produced, in event, a surprising and almost incredible effect upon the whole army. Amongst the troops not engaged, who, during the action, were throwing earth from the new trenches, with an alacrity that indicated a determination to defend them, every visage was seen to brighten, and to assume, instead of the gloom of despair, the glow of animation. This change, no less sudden than happy, left little room to doubt that the men, who ran the day before at the sight of an enemy, would now, to wipe away the stain of that disgrace, and to recover the confidence of their general, have conducted themselves in a very different manner. Some alteration was made in the distribution

\* A transcript from General Washington's Public Orders of the seventeenth will, better than any other document that could be adduced, show his sentiment on the conduct of the two preceding days, and how fervently he wished to foster the good dispositions discovered on the last.

#### “ORDERS.

“*Head-Quarters, Harlaem Heights, September 17, 1776.*

“Parole, *Leitch*. Countersign, *Virginia*.”

“The General most heartily thanks the troops commanded yesterday by Major Leitch, who first advanced upon the enemy, and the others who so resolutely supported them. The behaviour yesterday was such a contrast to that of some of the troops the day before, as must show what may be done, where officers and soldiers will exert themselves. Once more, therefore, the General calls upon officers and men, to act up to the noble cause in which they are engaged, and to support the *honour* and *liberties* of their country.

“The gallant and brave Colonel Knowlton, who would have been an honour to any country, having fallen yesterday, while gloriously fighting, Captain Brown is to take the command of the party lately led by Colonel Knowlton. Officers and men are to obey him accordingly.”

of corps, to prevent the British from gaining either flank in the succeeding night. General Putnam, who commanded on the right, was directed in orders, in case the enemy should attempt to force the pass, to apply for a re-enforcement to General Spencer, who commanded on the left.

General Putnam, who was too good a husbandman himself not to have a respect for the labours and improvements of others, strenuously seconded the views of the Commander-in-chief in preventing the devastation of farms, and the violation of private property. For under pretext that the property in this quarter belonged to friends to the British government, as indeed it mostly did, a spirit of rapine and licentiousness began to prevail, which, unless repressed in the beginning, foreboded, besides the subversion of discipline, the disgrace and defeat of our arms.

Our new defences now becoming so strong as not to admit insult with impunity, and Sir William Howe, not choosing to place too much at risk in attacking us in front, on the 12th day of October, leaving Lord Percy with one Hessian and two British brigades, in his lines at Harlaem, to cover New York, embarked with the main body of his army, with an intention of landing at *Throg's Neck*, situated near West-Chester, and little more than a league above the communication called King's-bridge, which connects New York Island with

the main. There was nothing to oppose him; and he effected his debarkation by nine o'clock in the morning. The same policy of keeping our army as compact as possible; the same system of avoiding being forced to action; and the same precaution to prevent the interruption of supplies, re-enforcements or retreat, that lately dictated the evacuation of New York, now induced General Washington to move towards the strong grounds in the upper part of West-Chester county.

General Putnam was with the army at White-Plains, and took part in the action fought there the 28th of October. It was the position of Brigadier-General M'Dougal which was attacked, and Washington ordered a detachment of the army under Major-General Putnam to support him. Some days after this action, General Putnam was ordered to cross the Hudson, and provide against an irruption of the enemy into New Jersey. He was soon followed by Washington with part of his army, which took post in the vicinity of Fort Lee, and, after the fall of that Fort, General Putnam was constantly about his person during the whole retreat through New Jersey, and among the last of the fugitive army which crossed the Delaware. He was then ordered to Philadelphia to fortify and defend that city, which Congress had ordered to be defended to the last extremity.

Without stopping to dilate on the subsequent

incidents, that might swell a folio, though here compressed to a single paragraph ; without attempting to give in detail the skilful retrograde movements of our Commander-in-chief, who, after detaching a garrison for Fort Washington, by pre-occupying with extemporaneous redoubts and intrenchments, the ridges from *Mile-Square* to *White-Plains*, and by folding one brigade behind another, in rear of those ridges that run parallel with the *Sound*, brought off all his artillery, stores, and sick, in the face of a superior foe ; without commenting on the partial and equivocal battle fought near the last mentioned village, or the cause why the British, then in full force, (for the last of the Hessian infantry and British light-horse had just arrived,) did not more seriously endeavour to induce a general engagement ; without journalizing their military manœuvres in falling back to King's-bridge, capturing Fort Washington, Fort Lee, and marching through the Jerseys ; without enumerating the instances of rapine, murder, lust, and devastation, that marked their progress, and filled our bosoms with horror and indignation ; without describing how a division of our dissolving army, with General Washington, was driven before them beyond the Delaware ; without painting the naked and forlorn condition of these much injured men, amidst the rigours of an inclement season ; and without even sketching the consternation that seized the States at this perilous

period, when General Lee, in leading from the north a small re-enforcement to our troops, was himself taken prisoner by surprise; when every thing seemed decidedly declining to the last extremity, and when every prospect but served to augment the depression of despair—until the genius of one man, in one day, at a single stroke, wrested from the veteran battalions of Britain and Germany the fruits acquired by the total operations of a successful campaign, and re-animated the expiring hope of a whole nation, by the glorious enterprise at Trenton.

While the hostile forces, rashly inflated with pride by a series of uninterrupted successes, and fondly dreaming that a period would soon be put to their labours, by the completion of their conquests, had been pursuing the wretched remnants of a disbanded army to the banks of the Delaware, General Putnam was diligently employed in fortifying Philadelphia, the capture of which appeared indubitably to be their principal object. Here, by authority and example, he strove to conciliate contending factions, and to excite the citizens to uncommon efforts in defence of every thing interesting to freemen. His personal industry was unparalleled. His orders,\* with respect to extinguish-

\* As a specimen, the following is preserved :

“GENERAL ORDERS.

“*Head-Quarters, Philadelphia, December 14, 1776.*

“Colonel Griffin is appointed Adjutant-General to the troops in and about this city. All orders from the General,

ing accidental fires, advancing the public works, as well as in regard to other important objects, were perfectly military and proper. But his health was, for a while, impaired by his unrelaxed exertions.

The Commander-in-chief, having in spite of all obstacles, made good his retreat over the Delaware, wrote to General Putnam from his camp above the falls of Trenton, on the very day he re-crossed the river to surprise the Hessians, expressing his satisfaction at the re-establishment of that General's health, and informing, that if he had not himself been well convinced before, of the enemy's intention to possess themselves of Philadelphia, as soon as the frost should form ice strong enough to transport them and their artillery across the Delaware, he had now obtained an intercepted letter, which placed the matter beyond a doubt. He added, that if the citizens of Philadelphia had any regard for the town, not a moment's time was to be lost until it should be put in the best possible posture of defence; but lest that should not be

through him, either written or verbal, are to be strictly attended to and punctually obeyed.

"In case of an alarm of fire, the city guards and patrols are to suffer the inhabitants to pass, unmolested, at any hour of the night; and the good people of Philadelphia are earnestly requested and desired to give every assistance in their power, with engines and buckets, to extinguish the fire. And as the Congress have ordered the city to be defended to the last extremity, the General hopes that no person will refuse to give every assistance possible to complete the fortifications that are to be erected in and about the city.

"ISRAEL PUTNAM."



done, he directed the removal of all public stores, except provisions necessary for immediate use, to places of greater security. He queried whether, if a party of militia could be sent from Philadelphia to support those in the Jerseys, about Mount Holly, it would not serve to save them from submission? At the same time he signified, as his opinion, the expediency of sending an active and influential officer to inspire the people, to encourage them to assemble in arms, as well as to keep those already in arms from disbanding; and concluded by manifesting a wish that Colonel Forman, whom he desired to see for this purpose, might be employed on the service.

The enemy had vainly, as incautiously, imagined, that to overrun was to conquer. They had even carried their presumption on our extreme weakness, and expected submission, so far, as to attempt covering the country through which they had marched, with an extensive chain of cantonments. That link, which the post at Trenton supplied, consisted of a Hessian brigade of infantry, a company of chasseurs, a squadron of light dragoons, and six field pieces. At eight o'clock in the morning of the twenty-sixth of December, General Washington, with twenty-four hundred men, came upon them, after they had paraded, took one thousand prisoners, and re-passed the same day, without loss, to his encampment. As soon as the troops were recovered from their excessive fatigue,

General Washington re-crossed a second time to Trenton. On the second of January, Lord Cornwallis, with the bulk of the British army, advanced upon him, cannonaded his post, and offered him battle: but the two armies being separated by the interposition of Trenton Creek, General Washington had it in his option to decline an engagement, which he did for the sake of striking the masterly stroke that he then meditated. Having kindled frequent fires around his camp, posted faithful men to keep them burning, and advanced sentinels, whose fidelity might be relied upon, he decamped silently after dark, and, by a circuitous route, reached Princeton at nine o'clock the next morning. The noise of the firing, by which he killed and captured between five and six hundred of the British brigade in that town, was the first notice Lord Cornwallis had of this stolen march. General Washington, the project successfully accomplished, instantly filed off for the mountainous grounds of Morristown. Meanwhile, his Lordship, who arrived, by a forced march, at Princeton, just as he had left it, finding the Americans could not be overtaken, proceeded, without halting, to Brunswick.

On the fifth of January, 1777, from Pluckemin, General Washington despatched an account of this second success to General Putnam, and ordered him to move immediately, with all his troops, to Crosswick's, for the purpose of co-operating in recovering the Jerseys ;

an event which the present fortunate juncture, while the enemy were yet panic-struck, appeared to promise. The General cautioned him, however, if the enemy should still continue at Brunswick, to guard with great circumspection against a surprise; especially as they, having recently suffered by two attacks, could scarcely avoid being edged with resentment to attempt retaliation. His Excellency farther advised him to give out his strength to be twice as great as it was; to forward on all the baggage and scattering men belonging to the division destined for Morristown; to employ as many spies as he should think proper; to keep a number of horsemen, in the dress of the country, going constantly backwards and forwards on the same secret service; and lastly, if he should discover any intention or motion of the enemy that could be depended upon, and might be of consequence, not to fail in conveying the intelligence, as rapidly as possible by express, to head quarters. Major-General Putnam was directed, soon after, to take post at Princeton, where he continued until the spring. He had never with him more than a few hundred troops, though he was only at fifteen miles distance from the enemy's strong garrison of Brunswick. At one period, from a sudden diminution, occasioned by the tardiness of the militia turning out to replace those whose time of service was expired, he had fewer men for duty than he had miles of frontier to guard. Nor

was the Commander-in-chief in a more eligible situation. It is true, that while he had scarcely the semblance of an army, under the specious parade of a park of artillery, and the imposing appearance of his head quarters, established at Morristown, he kept up, in the eyes of his countrymen, as well as in the opinion of his enemy, the appearance of no contemptible force. Future generations will find difficulty in conceiving, how a handful of new levied men and militia, who were necessitated to be inoculated for the small pox in the course of the winter, could be subdivided and posted so advantageously, as effectually to protect the inhabitants, confine the enemy, curtail their forage, and beat up their quarters, without sustaining a single disaster.

In the battle of Princeton, Captain M'Pherson, of the 17th British regiment, a very worthy Scotchman, was desperately wounded in the lungs, and left with the dead. Upon General Putnam's arrival there, he found him languishing in extreme distress, without a surgeon, without a single accommodation, and without a friend to solace the sinking spirit in the gloomy hour of death. He visited, and immediately caused every possible comfort to be administered to him. Captain M'Pherson, who, contrary to all appearances, recovered, after having demonstrated to General Putnam the dignified sense of obligations, which a generous mind wishes not to conceal, one day, in familiar conversation,

demanded, "Pray, Sir, what countryman are you." "An American," answered the latter.—"Not a Yankee?" said the other.—"A full blooded one," replied the General. "By G—d, I am sorry for that," rejoined M'Pherson, "I did not think there could be so much goodness and generosity in an American, or, indeed, in any body but a Scotchman."

While the recovery of Captain M'Pherson was doubtful, he desired that General Putnam would permit a friend in the British army at Brunswick, to come and assist him in making HIS WILL. General Putnam, who had then only fifty men in his whole command, was sadly embarrassed by the proposition. On the one hand, he was not content that a British officer should have an opportunity to spy out the weakness of his post; on the other, it was scarcely in his nature to refuse complying with a dictate of humanity. He luckily bethought himself of an expedient, which he hastened to put in practice. A flag of truce was despatched with Captain M'Pherson's request, but under an injunction not to return with his friend until after dark. In the evening, lights were placed in all the rooms of the College, and in every apartment of the vacant houses throughout the town. During the whole night, the fifty men, sometimes altogether, and sometimes in small detachments, were marched from different quarters, by the house in which M'Pherson lay. Afterwards it was known, that the officer who

came on the visit, at his return, reported that General Putnam's army, upon the most moderate calculation, could not consist of less than four or five thousand men.

This winter's campaign, for our troops constantly kept the field after regaining a footing in the Jerseys, has never yet been faithfully and feelingly described. The sudden restoration of our cause from the very verge of ruin, was interwoven with such a tissue of inscrutable causes and extraordinary events, that, fearful of doing the subject greater injustice, by a passing disquisition, than a purposed silence, I leave it to the leisure of abler pens. The ill policy of the British doubtless contributed to accelerate this event. For the manner, impolitic as inhuman, in which they managed their temporary conquests, tended evidently to alienate the affections of their adherents, to confirm the wavering in an opposite interest, to rouse the supine into activity, to assemble the dispersed to the standard of America, and to infuse a spirit of revolt into the minds of those men who had, from necessity, submitted to their power. Their conduct, in warring with fire and sword against the imbecility of youth, and the decrepitude of age; against the arts, the sciences, the curious inventions, and the elegant improvements in civilized life; against the melancholy widow, the miserable orphan, the peaceable professor of humane literature, and the sacred minister of the gospel, seemed

to operate as powerfully, as if purposely intended to kindle the dormant spark of resistance into an inextinguishable flame. If we add to the black catalogue of provocations already enumerated, their insatiable rapacity in plundering friends and foes indiscriminately; their libidinous brutality in violating the chastity of the female sex; their more than Gothic rage in defacing private writings, public records, libraries of learning, dwellings of individuals, edifices for education, and temples of the Deity; together with their insufferable ferocity, unprecedented indeed among civilized nations, in murdering on the field of battle the wounded, while begging for mercy, in causing their prisoners to famish with hunger and cold in prisons and prison ships, and in carrying their malice beyond death itself, by denying the decent rites of sepulture to the dead; we shall not be astonished that the yeomanry in the two Jerseys, when the first glimmering of hope began to break in upon them, rose as one man, with the unalterable resolution to perish in the generous cause, or expel their merciless invaders.

The principal officers, stationed at a variety of well chosen, and at some almost inaccessible positions, seemed all to be actuated by the same soul, and only to vie with each other in giving proofs of vigilance, enterprise, and valour. From what has been said respecting the scantiness of our aggregate force, it will be

concluded, that the number of men, under the orders of each, was indeed very small. But the uncommon alertness of the troops, who were incessantly hovering round the enemy in scouts, and the constant communication they kept between the several stations most contiguous to each other, agreeably to the instructions\* of the general-in-chief, together with their readiness in giving, and confidence of receiving such reciprocal aid as the exigencies might require, served to supply the defect of force.

This manner of doing duty not only put our own posts beyond the reach of sudden insult and surprise, but so exceedingly harassed and

\* The annexed private orders to Lord Stirling will show, in a laconic and military manner, the system of service then pursued :

“To Brigadier-General Lord STIRLING.

“MY LORD,

“You are to repair to Baskenridge, and take upon you the command of the troops now there, and such as may be sent to your care.

“You are to endeavour, as much as possible, to harass and annoy the enemy, by keeping scouting parties constantly, or as frequently as possible, around their quarters.

“As you will be in the neighbourhood of Generals Dickenson and Warner, I recommend it to you to keep up a correspondence with them, and endeavour to regulate your parties by theirs, so as to have some constantly out.

“Use every means in your power to obtain intelligence from the enemy; which may possibly be better effected by engaging some of those people who have obtained *protections*, to go in, under pretence of asking advice, than by any other means.

“You will also use every means in your power to obtain and communicate the earliest accounts of the enemy’s movements; and to assemble, in the speediest manner possible, your troops, either for offence or defence.

“Given at head-quarters, the fourth day of Feb., 1777.

“GEORGE WASHINGTON.”



intimidated the enemy, that foragers were seldom sent out by them, and never except in very large parties. General Dickenson, who commanded on General Putnam's left, discovered, about the 20th of January, a foraging party, consisting of about four hundred men, on the opposite side of the *Mill-stone*, two miles from Somerset court-house. As the bridge was possessed and defended by three field-pieces, so that it could not be passed, General Dickenson, at the head of four hundred militia, broke the ice, crossed the river where the water was about three feet deep, resolutely attacked, and totally defeated the foragers. Upon their abandoning the convoy, a few prisoners, forty wagons, and more than a hundred draft horses, with a considerable booty of cattle and sheep, fell into his hands.

Nor were our operations on General Putnam's right flank less fortunate. To give countenance to the numerous friends of the British government in the county of Monmouth appears to have been a principal motive with Sir William Howe for stretching the chain of his cantonments, by his own confession,\* pre-

\* *Extract of a Letter from General Sir WILLIAM HOWE to Lord GEORGE GERMAINE, dated New-York, December 20, 1776.*

Having mentioned the fruitless attempt of Lord Cornwallis to find boats at Corryel's ferry to pass the Delaware—he proceeds thus :

"The passage of the Delaware being thus rendered impracticable, his lordship took post at Pennington, in which place and Trenton the two divisions remained until the fourteenth, when the weather having become too severe to keep the field,

viously to his disaster, rather too far. After that chain became broken, as I have already related, by the blows at Trenton and Princeton, he was obliged to collect, during the rest of the winter, the useless remains in his barracks at Brunswick. In the meantime, General Putnam was much more successful in his attempts to protect our dispersed and dispirited friends in the same district; who, environed on every side by envenomed adversaries, remained inseparably riveted in affection to American independence. He first detached Colonel Gurney, and afterwards Major Davis,\* with such parties of militia as could be spared, for their support. Several skirmishes ensued, in which our people had always the advantage.

and the winter cantonments being arranged, the troops marched from both places to their respective stations. *The chain, I own, is rather too extensive*, but I was induced to occupy Burlington to cover the county of Monmouth, in which there are many loyal inhabitants; and trusting to the almost general submission of the country to the southward of this chain, and to the strength of the corps placed in the advanced posts, I conclude the troops will be in perfect security."

\* As there happened to be in my possession a copy of one of his letters to those officers, it was thought worthy of insertion here, in order to demonstrate his satisfaction with their conduct.

"To Major JOHN DAVIS, of the third battalion of Cumberland County Militia.

"SIR,

"I am much obliged to you for your activity, vigour, and diligence, since you have been under my command; you will, therefore, march your men to Philadelphia, and there discharge them; returning into the store all the ammunition, arms, and accoutrements, you received at that place.

"I am, sir, your humble servant,

"ISRAEL PUTNAM.

"Princeton, February 5, 1777."

They took, at different times, many prisoners, horses, and wagons, from foraging parties. In effect, so well did they cover the country, as to induce some of the most respectable inhabitants to declare, that the security of the persons, as well as the salvation of the property of many friends to freedom, was owing to the spirited exertions of these two detachments; who, at the same time that they rescued the country from the tyranny of tories, afforded an opportunity for the militia to recover from their consternation, to embody themselves in warlike array, and to stand on their defence.

During this period, General Putnam having received unquestionable intelligence that a party of refugees, in British pay, had taken post, and were erecting a kind of redoubt at Lawrence's Neck, sent Colonel Nelson, with one hundred and fifty militia, to surprise them. That officer conducted with so much secrecy and decision, as to take the whole prisoners. These refugees\* were commanded by Major Stockton, belonging to Skinner's brigade, and amounted to sixty in number.

\* *Extract of a Letter from General PUTNAM to the Council of Safety of Pennsylvania, dated at Princeton, February 18, 1777.*

"Yesterday evening Colonel Nelson, with a hundred and fifty men, at Lawrence's Neck, attacked sixty men of Cortlandt Skinner's brigade, commanded by the enemy's RENOWNED LAND PILOT Major Richard Stockton, routed them, and took the whole prisoners—among them the major, a captain, and three subalterns, with seventy stand of arms. *Fifty of the Bedford Pennsylvania riflemen behaved like veterans.*"

A short time after this event, Lord Cornwallis sent out another foraging party towards Bound Brook. General Putnam, having received notice from his emissaries, detached Major Smith, with a few riflemen, to annoy the party, and followed himself with the rest of his force. Before he could come up, Major Smith, who had formed an ambush, attacked the enemy, killed several horses, took a few prisoners and sixteen baggage-wagons, without sustaining any injury. By such operations, our hero, in the course of the winter, captured nearly a thousand prisoners.

In the latter part of February, General Washington advised General Putnam, that, in consequence of a large accession of strength from New-York to the British army at Brunswick, it was to be apprehended they would soon make a forward movement towards the Delaware: in which case, the latter was directed to cross the river with his actual force, to assume the command of the militia who might assemble, to secure the boats on the west side of the Delaware, and to facilitate the passage of the rest of the army. But the enemy did not remove from their winter-quarters until the season arrived when green forage could be supplied. In the intermediate period, the correspondence on the part of General Putnam with the Commander-in-chief consisted principally of reports and inquiries concerning the treatment of some of the following descriptions

of persons: either of those who came within our lines with flags and pretended flags, or who had taken protection from the enemy, or who had been reputed disaffected to our cause, or who were designed to be comprehended in the American proclamation, which required that those who had taken protections should give them to the nearest American officer, or go within the British lines. The letters of his Excellency in return, generally advisory, were indicative of confidence and approbation.

When the spring had now so far advanced that it was obvious the enemy would soon take the field, the Commander-in-chief, after desiring General Putnam to give the officer who was to relieve him at Princeton, all the information necessary for the conduct of that post, appointed that general to the command of a separate army in the Highlands of New-York.

It is scarcely decided, from any documents yet published, whether the preposterous plans prosecuted by the British generals in the campaign of 1777, were altogether the result of their orders from home, or whether they partly originated from the contingencies of the moment. The system which, at the time, tended to puzzle all human conjecture, when developed, served also to contradict all reasonable calculation. Certain it is, the American commander-in-chief was, for a considerable time, so perplexed with contradictory appearances, that he knew not how to distribute his troops,

with his usual discernment, so as to oppose the enemy with equal prospect of success in different parts. The gathering tempests menaced the northern frontiers, the posts in the Highlands, and the city of Philadelphia; but it was still doubtful where the fury of the storm would fall. At one time Sir William Howe was forcing his way by land to Philadelphia; at another, relinquishing the Jerseys; at a third, facing round to make a sudden inroad; then embarking with all the forces that could be spared from New-York; and then putting out to sea, at the very moment when General Burgoyne had reduced Ticonderoga, and seemed to require a co-operation in another quarter.

On our side, we have seen that the old continental army expired with the year 1776; since which, invention had been tortured with expedients, and zeal with efforts, to levy another: for on the success of the recruiting service depended the salvation of the country. The success was such as not to puff us up to presumption, or depress us to despair. The army in the Jerseys, under the orders of the general-in-chief, consisted of all the troops raised south of the Hudson; that in the northern department, of the New-Hampshire brigade, two brigades of Massachusetts, and the brigade of New-York, together with some irregular corps; and that in the Highlands, of the remaining two brigades of Massachusetts, the Connecticut line, consisting of two brigades,

the brigade of Rhode Island, and one regiment of New-York. Upon hearing of the loss of Ticonderoga, and the progress of the British towards Albany, General Washington ordered the northern army to be re-enforced with the two brigades of Massachusetts, then in the Highlands; and, upon finding the army under his immediate command out-numbered by that of Sir William Howe, which had, by the circuitous route of the Chesapeake, invaded Pennsylvania, he also called from the Highlands one of the Connecticut brigades, and that of Rhode Island, to his own assistance.

In the neighbourhood of General Putnam there was no enemy capable of exciting alarms. The army left at New-York seemed only designed for its defence. In it were several entire corps, composed of tories, who had flocked to the British standard. There was, besides, a band of lurking miscreants, not properly enrolled, who staid chiefly at West Chester; from whence they infested the country between the two armies, pillaged the cattle, and carried off the peaceable inhabitants. It was an unworthy policy in British generals to patronize banditti. The whig inhabitants on the edge of our lines, and still lower down, who had been plundered in a merciless manner, delayed not to strip the tories in return. People most nearly connected and allied frequently became most exasperated and inveterate in malice. Then the ties of fellowship were broken—then

friendship itself being soured to enmity, the mind readily gave way to private revenge, uncontrolled retaliation, and all the deforming passions that disgrace humanity. Enormities, almost without a name, were perpetrated, at the description of which, the bosom, not frozen to apathy, must glow with a mixture of pity and indignation. To prevent the predatory incursions from below, and to cover the county of West Chester, General Putnam detached from his head-quarters, at Peek's-Kill, Meigs's regiment, which, in the course of the campaign, struck several partizan strokes, and achieved the objects for which it was sent. He likewise took measures, without noise or ostentation, to secure himself from being surprised and carried within the British lines by the tories, who had formed a plan for the purpose. The information of this intended enterprise, conveyed to him through several channels, was corroborated by that obtained and transmitted by the Commander-in-chief.

It was not wonderful that many of these tories were able, undiscovered, to penetrate far into the country, and even to go with letters or messages from one British army to another. The inhabitants who were well affected to the royal cause, afforded them every possible support, and their own knowledge of the different routes gave them a farther facility in performing their peregrinations. Sometimes the most active loyalists, as the tories wished to denomi-



nate themselves, who had gone into the British posts, and received promises of commissions upon enlisting a certain number of soldiers, came back again secretly with recruiting instructions. Sometimes these, and others who came from the enemy within the verge of our camps, were detected and condemned to death, in conformity to the usages of war. But the British generals, who had an unlimited supply of money at their command, were able to pay with so much liberality, that emissaries could always be found. Still, it is thought that the intelligence of the American commanders was, at least, equally accurate, notwithstanding the poverty of their military chest, and the inability of rewarding mercenary agents, for secret services, in proportion to their risk and merit.

A person, by the name of Palmer, who was a lieutenant in the tory new levies, was detected in the camp at Peek's Kill. Governor Tryon, who commanded the new levies, reclaimed him as a British officer, represented the heinous crime of condemning a man commissioned by his majesty, and threatened vengeance in case he should be executed. General Putnam wrote the following pithy reply.

“SIR,

“Nathan Palmer, a lieutenant in your king's service, was taken in my camp as a *spy*—he was tried as a *spy*—he was condemned as a

*spy*—and you may rest assured, sir, he shall be hanged as a *spy*.

“I have the honour to be, &c.

“ISRAEL PUTNAM.

“*His Excellency Governor TRYON.*

“P. S. Afternoon. He is hanged.”

Important transactions soon occurred. Not long after the two brigades had marched from Peek's Kill, to Pennsylvania, a re-enforcement arrived at New-York from Europe. Appearances indicated that offensive operations would follow. General Putnam having been reduced in force to a single brigade in the field, and a single regiment in garrison at Fort Montgomery, repeatedly informed the Commander-in-chief, that the posts committed to his charge must, in all probability, be lost, in case an attempt should be made upon them; and that, circumstanced as he was, he could not be responsible for the consequences. His situation was certainly to be lamented; but it was not in the power of the Commander-in-chief to alter it, except by authorizing him to call upon the militia for aid—an aid always precarious, and often so tardy, as, when obtained, to be of no utility.

On the fifth of October, Sir Henry Clinton came up the North River with three thousand men. After making many feints to mislead the attention, he landed, the next morning, at Stony Point, and commenced his march over

the mountains to Fort Montgomery. Governor Clinton, an active, resolute, and intelligent officer, who commanded the garrison, upon being apprised of the movement, despatched a letter, by express, to General Putnam for succour. By the treachery of the messenger, the letter miscarried. General Putnam, astonished at hearing nothing respecting the enemy, rode, with General Parsons, and Colonel Root, his adjutant-general, to reconnoitre them at King's Ferry. In the mean-time, at five o'clock in the afternoon, Sir Henry Clinton's column, having surmounted the obstacles and barriers of nature, descended from the Thunder-Hill, through thickets impassable but for light troops, and attacked\* the different re-

\* The author of these memoirs, then major of brigade to the first Connecticut brigade, was alone at head-quarters when the firing began. He hastened to Colonel Wyllys, the senior officer in camp, and advised him to despatch all the men not on duty to Fort Montgomery, without waiting for orders. About five hundred men marched instantly under Colonel Meigs; and the author, with Dr. Beardsley, a surgeon in the brigade, rode, at full speed, through a bye-path, to let the garrison know that a re-enforcement was on its march. Notwithstanding all the haste these officers made to and over the river, the fort was so completely invested on their arrival, that it was impossible to enter. They went on board the new frigate which lay near the fortress, and had the misfortune to be idle, though not unconcerned, spectators of the storm. They saw the minutest actions distinctly when the works were carried. The frigate, after receiving several platoons, slipped her cable, and proceeded a little way up the river; but the wind and tide becoming adverse, the crew set her on fire, to prevent her falling into the hands of the enemy, whose ships were approaching. The lowering darkness of the night, the profound stillness that reigned, the interrupted flashes of the flames that illuminated the waters, the long shadows of the cliffs that now and then were seen, the explosion of the can-

doubts. The garrison, inspired by the conduct of their leaders, defended the works with distinguished valour. But, as the post had been designed principally to prevent the passing of ships, and as an assault in rear had not been expected, the works on the land side were incomplete and untenable. In the dusk of twilight, the British entered with their bayonets fixed. Their loss was inconsiderable. Nor was that of the garrison great. Governor Clinton, his brother, General James Clinton, Colonel Dubois, and most of the officers and men, effected their escape under cover of the thick smoke and darkness that suddenly prevailed. The capture of this fort by Sir Henry Clinton, together with the consequent removal of the chains and booms that obstructed the navigation, opened a passage to Albany, and seemed to favour a junction of his force with that of General Burgoyne. But the latter having been compelled to capitulate a few days after this event, and great numbers of militia having arrived from New-England, the successful army returned to New-York; yet not before a detachment from it, under the orders of General Vaughan, had burnt the defenceless town of Esopus, and several scattering buildings on the banks of the river.

non which were left loaded in the ship, and the reverberating echo which resounded, at intervals, between the stupendous mountains on both sides of the river, composed an awful night-piece for persons prepared by the preceding scene, to contemplate subjects of horrid sublimity.

Notwithstanding the army in the Highlands had been so much weakened, for the sake of strengthening the armies in other quarters, as to have occasioned the loss of Fort Montgomery, yet that loss was productive of no consequences. Our main army in Pennsylvania, after having contended with superior force in two indecisive battles, still held the enemy in check; while the splendid success which attended our arms at the northward, gave a more favourable aspect to the American affairs, at the close of this campaign, than they had ever before assumed.

When the enemy fell back to New-York by water, we followed them a part of the way by land. Colonel Meigs, with a detachment from the several regiments in General Parsons' brigade, having made a forced march from Crompond to West Chester, surprised and broke up for a time the band of freebooters, of whom he brought off fifty, together with many cattle and horses which they had recently stolen.

Soon after this enterprise, General Putnam advanced towards the British lines. As he had received intelligence that small bodies of the enemy were out, with orders from Governor Tryon to burn Wright's mills, he prevented it by detaching three parties, of one hundred men in each. One of these parties fell in with and captured thirty-five, and another forty, of the new levies. But as he could not prevent a

third hostile party from burning the house of Mr. Van Tassel, a noted whig, and a committee-man, who was forced to go along with them, naked and barefoot, on the icy ground, in a freezing night, he, for the professed purpose of retaliation, sent Captain Buchanan, in a whale-boat, to burn the house of General Oliver Delancy on York Island. Buchanan effected his object, and by this expedition put a period, for the present, to that unmeaning and wanton species of destruction.

While General Putnam quartered at New-Rochelle, a scouting party, which had been sent to West-Farms, below West-Chester, surrounded the house in which Colonel James Delancy lodged, and, notwithstanding he crept under the bed the better to be concealed, brought him to Head-Quarters before morning. This officer was exchanged by the British general without delay, and placed at the head of the cow-boys, a licentious corps of irregulars, who, in the sequel, committed unheard of depredations and excesses.

It was distressing to see so beautiful a part of the country so barbarously wasted, and often to witness some peculiar scene of female misery: for most of the female inhabitants had been obliged to fly within the lines possessed by one army or the other. Near our quarters was an affecting instance of human vicissitude. Mr. William Sutton, of Mamaroneck, an inoffensive man, a merchant by profession, who lived

in a decent fashion, and whose family had as happy prospects as almost any in the country, upon some imputation of toryism, went to the enemy. His wife, oppressed with grief in the disagreeable state of dereliction, did not long survive. Betsey Sutton, their eldest daughter, was a modest and lovely young woman, of about fifteen years old, when, at the death of her mother, the care of five or six younger children devolved upon her. She was discreet and provident beyond her years; but when we saw her, she looked to be feeble in health—broken in spirit—wan, melancholy, and dejected. She said “that their last cow, which furnished milk for the children, had lately been taken away—that they had frequently been plundered of their wearing apparel and furniture, she believed by both parties—that they had little more to lose—and that she knew not where to procure bread for the dear little ones, who had no father to provide for them”—*no mother*—she was going to have said—but a torrent of tears choked articulation. In coming to that part of the country again, after some campaigns had elapsed, I found the habitation desolate, and the garden overgrown with weeds. Upon inquiry, I learnt, that as soon as we left the place, some ruffians broke into the house while she lay in bed, in the latter part of the night; and that, having been terrified by their rudeness, she ran, half-naked, into a neighbouring swamp, where she continued until the

morning—there the poor girl caught a violent cold, which ended in a consumption. It finished a life without a spot—and a career of sufferings commenced and continued without a fault.

Sights of wretchedness always touched with commiseration the feelings of General Putnam, and prompted his generous soul to succour the afflicted. But the indulgence which he showed, whenever it did not militate against his duty, towards the deserted and suffering families of the tories in the State of New York, was the cause of his becoming unpopular with no inconsiderable class of people in that State. On the other side, he had conceived an unconquerable aversion to many of the persons who were intrusted with the disposal of tory property, because he believed them to have been guilty of peculations and other infamous practices. But although the enmity between him and the sequestrators was acrimonious as mutual, yet he lived in habits of amity with the most respectable characters in public departments, as well as in private life.

His character was also respected by the enemy. He had been acquainted with many of the principal officers in a former war. As flags frequently passed between the out-posts, during his continuance on the lines, it was a common practice to forward newspapers by them; and as those printed by Rivington, the royal printer in New York, were infamous for



the falsehoods with which they abounded, General Putnam once sent a packet to his old friend General Robertson, with this billet: "Major-General Putnam presents his compliments to Major-General Robertson, and sends him some American newspapers for his perusal;—when General Robertson shall have done with them, it is requested they be given to Rivington, in order that he may print some truth."

Late in the year we left the lines and repaired to the Highlands; for upon the loss of Fort Montgomery, the Commander-in-chief determined to build another fortification for the defence of the river. His Excellency, accordingly, wrote to General Putnam to fix upon the spot. After reconnoitring all the different places proposed, and revolving in his own mind their relative advantages for offence on the water and defence on the land, he fixed upon WEST-POINT. It is no vulgar praise to say, that to him belongs the glory of having chosen this rock of our military salvation. The position for water-batteries, which might sweep the channel where the river formed a right angle, made it the most proper of any for commanding the navigation; while the rocky ridges that rose in awful sublimity behind each other, rendered it impregnable, and even incapable of being invested by less than twenty thousand men. The British, who considered this post as a sort of American Gibraltar,

never attempted it but by the treachery of an American officer. All the world knows that this project failed, and that West Point continues to be the receptacle of every thing valuable in military preparations to the present day.

In the month of January, 1778, when a snow, two feet deep, lay on the earth, General Parsons' brigade went to West-Point and broke ground. Want of covering for the troops, together with want of tools and materials for the works, made the prospect truly gloomy and discouraging. It was necessary that means should be found, though our currency was depreciated, and our treasury exhausted. The estimates and requisitions of Colonel la Radiere, the engineer who laid out the works, altogether disproportioned to our circumstances, served only to put us in mind of our poverty, and, as it were, to satirize our resources. His petulant behaviour, and unaccommodating disposition, added farther embarrassments. It was then that the patriotism of Governor Clinton shone in full lustre. His exertions to furnish supplies can never be too much commended. His influence, arising from his popularity, was unlimited: yet he hesitated not to put all his popularity at risk, whenever the federal interests demanded. Notwithstanding the impediments that opposed our progress, with his aid, before the opening of the campaign, the works were in great forwardness.

According to a resolution of Congress, an inquiry was to be made into the causes of military disasters. Major-General M'Dougall, Brigadier-General Huntington, and Colonel Wigglesworth composed the Court of Inquiry on the loss of Fort Montgomery. Upon full knowledge and mature deliberation of facts on the spot, they reported the loss to have been occasioned by want of men, and not by any fault in the commanders.

General Putnam, who during the investigation was relieved from duty, as soon as Congress had approved the report, took command of the right wing of the grand army, under the orders of the General-in-chief. This was just after the battle of Monmouth, when the three armies, which had last year acted separately, joined at the White-plains. Our effective force, in one camp, was at no other time so respectable as at this juncture. The army consisted of sixty regular regiments of foot, formed into fifteen brigades, four battalions of artillery, four regiments of horse, and several corps of State troops. But as the enemy kept close within their lines on York Island, nothing could be attempted. Towards the end of autumn we broke up the camp, and went first to Fredericksburgh, and thence to winter-quarters.

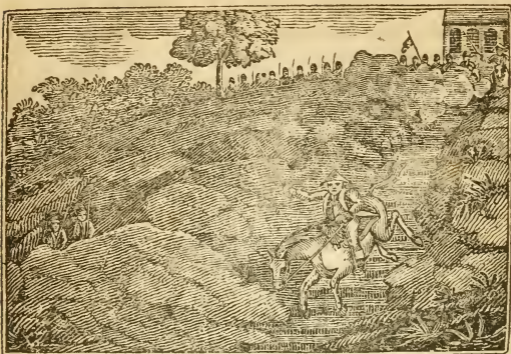
In order to cover the country adjoining to the *Sound*, and to support the garrison of *West Point*, in case of an attack, Major-General Putnam was stationed, for the winter, at Reading,

in Connecticut. He had under his orders, the brigade of New Hampshire, the two brigades of Connecticut, the corps of infantry commanded by Hazen, and that of cavalry by Sheldon.

The troops, who had been badly fed, badly clothed, and worse paid, by brooding over their grievances in the leisure and inactivity of winter quarters, began to think them intolerable. The Connecticut brigades formed the design of marching to Hartford, where the general assembly was then in session, and of demanding redress at the point of the bayonet. Word having been brought to General Putnam, that the second brigade was under arms for this purpose, he mounted his horse, galloped to the cantonment, and thus addressed them: "My brave lads, whither are you going? Do you intend to desert your officers, and to invite the enemy to follow you into the country? Whose cause have you been fighting and suffering so long in—is it not your own? Have you no property, no parents, wives or children? You have behaved like men so far—all the world is full of your praises—and posterity will stand astonished at your deeds: but not if you spoil all at last. Don't you consider how much the country is distressed by the war, and that your officers have not been any better paid than yourselves? But we all expect better times, and that the country will do us ample justice. Let us all stand by one another, then, and fight it out

like brave soldiers. Think what a shame it would be for Connecticut men to run away from their officers." After the several regiments had received the General, as he rode along the line, *with drums beating, and presented arms*, the sergeants, who had then the command, brought the men *to an order*, in which position they continued while he was speaking. When he had done, he directed the acting major of brigade to give the word for them to shoulder, march to their regimental parades, and lodge arms; all which they executed with promptitude and apparent good humour. One soldier, only, who had been the most active, was confined in the quarter-guard; from whence, at night, he attempted to make his escape. But the sentinel, who had also been in the mutiny, shot him dead on the spot, and thus the affair subsided.

About the middle of winter, while General Putnam was on a visit to his out-post at Horse-Neck, he found Governor Tryon advancing upon that town with a corps of fifteen hundred men. To oppose these General Putnam had only a picket of one hundred and fifty men, and two iron field-pieces, without horses or drag-ropes. He, however, planted his cannon on the high ground, by the meeting-house, and retarded their approach by firing several times, until, perceiving the horse (supported by the infantry) about to charge, he ordered the picket to provide for their safety, by retiring to a



PUTNAM'S ESCAPE AT HORSE-NECK.—p. 164.

swamp, inaccessible to horse, and secured his own, by plunging down the steep precipice at the church upon a full trot. This precipice is so steep, where he descended, as to have artificial stairs, composed of nearly one hundred stone steps, for the accommodation of foot passengers. There the dragoons, who were but a sword's length from him, stopped short ; for the declivity was so abrupt, that they ventured not to follow ; and, before they could gain the valley, by going round the brow of the hill in the ordinary road, he was far enough beyond their reach. He continued his route, unmolested, to Stamford ; whence, having strengthened his picket by the junction of some militia, he came back again, and in turn, pursued Governor

Tryon in his retreat.\* As he rode down the precipice, one ball, of the many fired at him, went through his beaver: but Governor Tryon, by way of compensation for spoiling his hat, sent him, soon afterwards, as a present, a complete suit of clothes.

In the campaign of 1779, which terminated the career of General Putnam's services, he commanded the Maryland line, posted at Buttermilk falls, about two miles below West Point. He was happy in possessing the friendship of the officers of that line, and in living on terms of hospitality with them. Indeed there was no family in the army that lived better than his own. The General, his second son, Major Daniel Putnam, and the writer of these memoirs, composed that family. This campaign, principally spent in strengthening the works of West Point, was only signalized for the storm of Stony Point, by the light infantry under the conduct of General Wayne, and the surprise of the post of Powles-Hook, by the corps under the command of Colonel Henry Lee. When the army quitted the field, and marched to Morristown, into winter quarters, General Putnam's family went into Connecticut, for a few weeks. In December, the General began

\* In this retreat, though with a very inferior force, General Putnam made about fifty prisoners, part of whom were wounded, and the whole were the next day sent, under the escort of an officer's guard, to the British lines, for exchange. It was for the humanity and kindness of Putnam to the wounded prisoners, that Governor Tryon complimented him with the "suit of clothes."

his journey to Morristown. Upon the road between Pomfret and Hartford, he felt an unusual torpor slowly pervading his right hand and foot. This heaviness crept gradually on, until it had deprived him of the use of his limbs on that side, in a considerable degree, before he reached the house of his friend, Colonel Wadsworth. Still he was unwilling to consider his disorder of the paralytic kind, and endeavoured to shake it off by exertion. Having found that impossible, a temporary dejection, disguised, however, under a veil of assumed cheerfulness, succeeded. But reason, philosophy, and religion, soon reconciled him to his fate. In that situation he has constantly remained, favoured with such a portion of bodily activity as enables him to walk and to ride moderately; and retaining, unimpaired, his relish for enjoyment, his love of pleasantries, his strength of memory, and all the faculties of his mind. As a proof that the powers of memory are not weakened, it ought to be observed, that he has lately repeated, from recollection, all the adventures of his life, which are here recorded, and which had formerly been communicated to the compiler in detached conversations.

In patient, yet fearless expectation of the approach of THE KING OF TERRORS, whom he hath full often faced in the field of blood, the Christian hero now enjoys, in domestic retirement, the fruit of his early industry. Having in youth provided a competent subsistence for



old age, he was secured from the danger of penury and distress, to which so many officers and soldiers, worn out in the public service, have been reduced. To illustrate his merits the more fully, this essay will be concluded with a copy of the last letter written to him, by General Washington, in his military character.

“ *Head Quarters, 2d June, 1783.*

“ DEAR SIR,

“ YOUR favour of the 20th of May I received with much pleasure. For I can assure you, that among the many worthy and meritorious officers with whom I have had the happiness to be connected in service through the course of this war, and from whose cheerful assistance in the various and trying vicissitudes of a complicated contest, *the name of a PUTNAM is not forgotten*; nor will be but with that stroke of time which shall obliterate from my mind the remembrance of all those toils and fatigues through which we have struggled for the preservation and establishment of the *Rights, Liberties, and Independence* of our *Country*.

“ YOUR congratulations on the happy prospects of peace and independent security, with their attendant blessings to the UNITED STATES, I receive with great satisfaction; and beg that you will accept a return of my gratulations to you on this auspicious event—an event in which, great as it is in itself, and glorious as it will probably be in its consequences,

you have a right to participate largely, from the distinguished part you have contributed towards its attainment.

“But while I contemplate the greatness of the object for which we have contended, and felicitate you on the happy issue of our toils and labours, which have terminated with such general satisfaction, I lament that you should feel the ungrateful returns of a country, in whose service you have exhausted your bodily strength, and expended the vigour of a youthful constitution. I wish, however, that your expectations of returning liberality may be verified. I have a hope they may—but should they not, your case will not be a singular one. *Ingratitude has been experienced in all ages, and REPUBLICS, in particular, have ever been famed for the exercise of that unnatural and SORDID VICE.*

“The SECRETARY AT WAR, who is now here, informs me that you have ever been considered as entitled to full pay since your absence from the field, and that you will still be considered in that light until the close of the war; at which period you will be equally entitled to the same emoluments of half-pay or commutation as other officers of your rank. The same opinion is also given by the paymaster-general, who is now with the army, empowered by Mr. Morris for the settlement of all their accounts, and who will attend to your's whenever you shall think proper to send on

for the purpose, which it will probably be best for you to do in a short time.

“I anticipate, with pleasure, the day, and that, I trust, not far off, when I shall quit the busy scenes of a military employment, and retire to the more tranquil walks of domestic life. In that, or whatever other situation Providence may dispose of my future days, THE REMEMBRANCE OF THE MANY FRIENDSHIPS AND CONNEXIONS I HAVE HAD THE HAPPINESS TO CONTRACT WITH THE GENTLEMEN OF THE ARMY, WILL BE ONE OF MY MOST GRATEFUL REFLECTIONS. *Under this contemplation, and impressed with the sentiments of benevolence and regard, I commend you, my dear sir, my other friends, and with them, the interests and happiness of our dear country, to the KEEPING AND PROTECTION OF ALMIGHTY GOD.*

“I have the honour to be, &c.

“GEORGE WASHINGTON.

“*To the Hon. Maj. Gen. PUTNAM.*”

The remainder of the life of General Putnam was passed in quiet retirement with his family. He experienced few interruptions in his bodily health, (except the paralytic debility with which he was afflicted,) retained full possession of his mental faculties, and enjoyed the society of his friends until the 17th of May, 1790, when he was violently attacked with an inflammatory disease. Satisfied from the first that it would prove mortal, he was calm and

resigned, and welcomed the approach of death with joy, as a messenger sent to call him from a life of toil to everlasting rest. On the 19th of May, 1790, he ended a life which had been spent in cultivating and defending the soil of his birth.

Much of his life had been spent in arms, and the military of the neighbourhood were desirous that the rites of sepulture should be accompanied with martial honours: they felt that this last tribute of respect was due to a soldier, who, from a patriotic love of country, had devoted the best part of his life to the defence of her rights, and the establishment of her independence—and who, through long and trying services, was never once reproached for misconduct as an officer; but when disease compelled him to retire from service, left it, beloved and respected by the army and his chief, and with high claims to the grateful remembrance of his country.

Under these impressions, the grenadiers of the 11th regiment, the independent corps of artillerists, and the militia companies in the neighbourhood, assembled each at their appointed rendezvous, early on the morning of the 21st, and having repaired to the late dwelling house of the deceased, a suitable escort was formed, attended by a procession of the masonic brethren present, and a large concourse of respectable citizens, which moved to the congregational meeting house in Brooklyn; and, after

divine service performed by the Rev. Dr. Whitney, all that was earthly of a patriot and hero was laid in the silent tomb, under the discharge of volleys from the infantry, and minute guns from the artillery.

*The following eulogium was pronounced at the grave of General Putnam by Dr. A. Waldo.*

“Those venerable relics! once delighted in the endearing domestic virtues, which constitute the excellent neighbour—husband—parent—and worthy brother! liberal and substantial in his friendship;—unsuspicious—open—and generous;—just and sincere in dealing; a benevolent citizen of the world—he concentrated in his bosom, the noble qualities of an HONEST MAN.

“Born a *hero*—whom nature taught and cherished in the lap of innumerable toils and dangers, he was terrible in battle! But, from the amiableness of his heart—when carnage ceased, his humanity spread over the *field*, like the refreshing zephyrs of a summer’s evening!—The prisoner—the wounded—the sick—the forlorn—experienced the delicate sympathy of *this SOLDIER’S PILLOW*—the poor, and the needy, of every description, received the charitable bounties of *this CHRISTIAN SOLDIER*.

“He pitied littleness—loved goodness—admired greatness, and ever aspired to its glorious summit! The friend, the servant, and

almost unparalleled lover of his country ;—worn with honourable age, and the former toils of *war*—PUTNAM ! ‘ Rests from his labours.’

“ Till mouldering worlds and tumbling systems burst !  
When the last trump shall renovate his dust—  
Still by the mandate of eternal truth,  
His soul will ‘ flourish in immortal youth !’

“ This all who knew him know ;—this all who loved him, tell.”

*The late Rev. Dr. Dwight, President of Yale College, who knew General Putnam intimately, has portrayed his character faithfully in the following inscription, which is engraven on his tomb.*

Sacred be this Monument  
to the memory  
of  
ISRAEL PUTNAM, ESQUIRE,  
senior Major-General in the armies  
of  
the United States of America ;  
who  
was born at Salem,  
in the Province of Massachusetts,  
on the 7th day of January,  
A. D. 1718,  
and died  
on the 19th day of May,  
A. D. 1790.  
Passenger,  
if thou art a Soldier,  
drop a tear over the dust of a Hero  
who,  
ever attentive  
to the lives and happiness of his men,  
dared to lead  
where any dared to follow ;  
if a Patriot,  
remember the distinguished and gallant services  
rendered thy country  
by the Patriot who sleeps beneath this marble ;  
if thou art honest, generous, and worthy,  
tender a cheerful tribute of respect  
to a man,  
whose generosity was singular,  
whose honesty was proverbial ;  
who  
raised himself to universal esteem,  
and offices of eminent distinction,  
by personal worth  
and a  
useful life,

## TO THE READER.

THROUGH inadvertence, an error has escaped in the Title page, which is here corrected. The main part is from the pen of Colonel Humphreys; but so far as General Putnam was connected with the battle of Bunker Hill, the principal portion is extracted from an "Historical and Topographical Sketch of Bunker Hill Battle, by Samuel Swett." The Anecdotes are by the same hand.



## APPENDIX.

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THE important particulars in the life of General Putnam having been already narrated, the remaining pages will be occupied by revolutionary anecdotes, which tend to show the body of the times, its form and pressure, "in those days which literally tried men's souls." The reader will require no unusual condiment to give these a keen relish.

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GENERAL WARD received from the general Congress the appointment of first major-general, and second in command of the American army. On the arrival of General Washington at Cambridge, he assumed the command of the right wing at Roxbury, and his general disposition of the troops about Boston, was sanctioned by the approbation of the Commander-in-chief. From extreme ill health, he resigned his commission in April, 1776; but notwithstanding his resignation was accepted, at the earnest request of Congress and General Washington, he continued in command, near Boston, until the 20th of March, 1777. He was afterwards a member of Congress under the old

confederation and present constitution, and died in 1800, aged seventy-three.

The veteran General Pomeroy heard the pealing artillery, which seemed to invite him to battle ; he was a soldier too brave, and a patriot too ardent, to resist a summons so agreeable. He requested a horse of General Ward, to carry him to the field ; delighted at an aid so important, it was instantly supplied. With his musket and cartridges, he repaired to the Neck ; inquiring of a sentry posted there, and viewing the ground and the tremendous fire across, he was alarmed, not for himself, but for the horse he had borrowed ; he delivered him to the sentry, and coolly marched across. He advanced to the rail fence at the left. His approach gave new confidence to the men ; they received him with the highest exultation, and the name of General Pomeroy rang through the line. In early life he had been an ingenious mechanic, and many a soldier was supplied with arms of his manufacture. Had Vulcan himself supplied the Grecians with his celestial armour, and appeared in their ranks, they would not have been more certain of victory.

General Pomeroy expressed his strong sense of the blindness of fortune, that, of the two volunteer generals in the battle, Warren, the young and chivalrous soldier, the eloquent and enlightened legislator, should fall, and he escape, old and useless, unhurt. From age he declined the honourable appointment of briga-

dier-general of the United States army, and retired from service. But, like the veteran war-horse, when the echoes of his majestic Connecticut rang with the clarion of battle, he spurned the peaceful retreat which his long life and long services demanded. He preferred even a regiment to inaction, and, as a colonel, marched to join the kindred spirits who composed our army in the Jerseys. His exposures produced a pleurisy, which proved fatal at Peekskill, in New-York, where his country owes him a monument, and bravery and patriotism perennial fame.

General Thomas was appointed first brigadier-general under the United States, in 1776 was appointed major-general, and on the death of Montgomery, repaired to Canada, to command the American forces before Quebec. Their situation was nearly desperate; but he was too adventurous to relinquish the enterprise without one attempt to secure the favours of fortune. He endeavoured to burn the enemy's naval force before the city by a fire-ship, intending to attack the place during the conflagration; but the fire-ship miscarried, and the general was compelled to order a retreat, during which he died of the small pox at Chamblee.

The veteran Colonel Joseph Frye, who had served in the war of 1756, was at the siege of Louisbourg, and taken prisoner in Fort William Henry, immediately after the battle the

21st June, was appointed major-general by the Provincial Congress. He served some time in the revolutionary war, and lived to a very advanced age, at Fryeburgh, which received its name from his family.

Colonel Gardner lived a few days after the battle, and on being asked if he was well enough to see his son; "yes," answered the hero, "if he has done his duty." Being informed that he had distinguished himself, he saw him, and died with the glorious consolation of leaving the invaluable legacy of his own fame and his country's gratitude to a son worthy to support the honours of his name.

The brave Knowlton, from the first moment of the battle to the latest period of the retreat, showed himself worthy the distinguished honour of being selected as the first among the Connecticut captains.

He afterwards received the commission of lieutenant-colonel, and at the battle of Haerlem Heights, was sent by Washington to attack the enemy's rear; a bloody action ensued; Knowlton and his men fought the whole force of the enemy, of vastly superior numbers, before the Americans could attack in front, and got the better of them. He restored by this gallant affair a glorious moral force to the army nearly extinguished by disasters; but it was at the expense of many brave men in the unequal contest; his assistant officer, Major Leitch, was slain, with three balls through him, and he

himself reaped immortal honour and immortal life together.

Washington paid due honours to his memory, in general orders, and declared, "he had died a glorious death, which every soldier ought to wish for, and would have been an honour to any country on earth."

The same indignation felt by Colonel Prescott, at the loss of the battle, was general in the army, and throughout the country; a scrutiny, most severe and unrelenting, was instituted into the conduct of every one, to bring condign punishment on those whose misconduct had caused the final issue. Even Colonel Bridge, notwithstanding the severity of his labours, and the dangerous and honourable wounds he received, had to pass the ordeal of a court martial.

Notwithstanding this inquisitorial research, we are happy to add, out of near three thousand, who, at different stages of the battle, must have been engaged in it, and most of them for the first time, four only were discovered guilty of misconduct. Of these, Major Gridley was tried for neglect of duty, Brigadier-General Green being president of the court, which "find him guilty of breach of orders, and therefore dismiss him from the Massachusetts service: but on account of his inexperience and youth, and the great confusion which attended that day's transaction in general, they do not consider him incapable of a Continental commis-

sion, should the general officers recommend him to his Excellency."

Colonel Mansfield was obviously guilty of an error, arising only from inexperience. Two only were found guilty of cowardice; of these Colonel Gerrish was certainly guilty of a want of military ardour and activity, but this was a constitutional defect. He was not accused before the committee of Congress by General Putnam, and, in the opinion of the very respectable judge advocate who tried him, he was far too harshly treated.

The only officer apparently guilty of cowardice, Captain Callender, is a glorious instance of the buoyancy of real New England heroism, and the redeeming efficacy of a pure conscience, a mind conscious of rectitude. The furious denunciation of Putnam, the condemnation of the court, and thundering proscription of Washington, would have crushed any one for ever, who was armed with a panoply less divine.

A committee of Congress was appointed to inquire into the truth of a report, that some officers of the army had been guilty of misconduct; they report, that they had made inquiry of General Putnam and other officers, who were in the hottest of the battle, and that the general charged Captain Callender and another artillery officer, with infamous cowardice, one of the principal causes of the defeat, and informed them that he would quit the service if these officers were not made an example of,

and that one of them ought to be shot. The court martial condemned Captain Callender, and General Washington approved the judgment, "not only from the particular guilt of Captain Callender, but the fatal consequence of such a conduct to the army, and to the cause of America in general."

Notwithstanding this, our hero resolved to compel the world to acknowledge, by his future conduct, that his past had been mistaken. He continued with his corps as a volunteer, and desperately exposed himself in every action. The brave and beneficent General Knox extended to him his friendship.

At the battle on Long Island, the captain and lieutenant of the company of artillery, with which he served, were shot; he assumed the command, and fought the pieces to the last; refused to retreat, and the bayonets of the soldiers were just upon him, when a British officer, admiring his chivalrous and desperate courage, interfered and saved his life.

General Washington expressed his high approbation of his conduct, gave him his hand with his most cordial thanks; ordered the sentence of the court martial condemning him, to be erased from the orderly book, and restored to him his commission. He held his commission during the war, and left the service at the peace, with the highest honour and reputation.

Captain Dearborn was afterwards highly distinguished during the revolutionary war, for

his bravery and enterprise. He volunteered at the head of a company of men, selected from the regiment to accompany Arnold in the winter of 1775, through the trackless wilds, to Quebec; an enterprise, which, in daring, hardihood, and courage, is not surpassed by the immortal passage of the Alps by Hannibal. He was major of a battalion of light infantry, at Saratoga, and his services were acknowledged by Gates, in the highest terms of approbation. Cilley's regiment, of which he was lieutenant-colonel, was the most distinguished corps in the battle of Monmouth, and the salvation of the army was owing to their heroic courage. General Washington acknowledged the service, and sent to inquire what regiment it was. "Full blooded yankees, by . . . . sir," was the answer of Dearborn. He was afterwards secretary at war, appointed by Mr. Jefferson; and during the last war was the first major-general and senior officer of the American army.

Porter, the promising artillerist, who stood by his piece and his captain to the last, has since then risen through every grade of office to the rank of brigadier-general in the army, to which he has ever since belonged; and has maintained an uniform and distinguished reputation as one of the first artillery officers in service. The important post of Norfolk was intrusted to his command the last war, and he is now stationed at Boston, in command of the very dis-



trict which he so bravely contributed to defend in 1775.

Immediately after the battle of Bunker Hill, the rank of major-general was conferred on Colonel Gridley.

America commenced her revolution with but four pieces of cannon, and to his mechanical science and ingenuity she was indebted for the first mortars and cannon ever cast in the country.

After being confined some months by his wound, he repaired to Cambridge, and superintended the fortifications erecting round Boston. On the 4th March, 1776, he was again engaged in erecting fortifications in the night, and the address, science, and prodigies of labour, displayed at Dorchester Heights, were perhaps never exceeded, except on Breed's Hill. These works expelled the enemy from Boston. General Gridley fortified the heights of this place and the islands in the harbour, and General Washington urged him to accompany the army, but his advanced age forbade. He retired on half pay. In 1795 he assisted in laying the corner stone of the state house, as he had in 1775 to lay the corner stone of the state, and lived in remarkable health to the age of eighty-six, a model of courtliness, beneficence, and hospitality, as well as all the high perfections of a soldier.

Colonel Stark will be recognised as the hero of Bennington, but it is not so generally known

that he employed an ingenious and successful expedient to strike a panic into the enemy, and assist him in achieving his glorious victory. He had one iron cannon, but neither powder sufficient to employ it, nor balls; he ordered an officer, however, to charge it, who objected the want of balls; "no matter," said the colonel, "load it with blank cartridge, and let the discharge be the signal for all the troops to rush on the enemy." The Hessians were panic-struck at the thundering report, his troops rushed on with loud hurrahs, and the victory was complete.

Honourable James Winthrop, and James Swan, Esquire, accompanied the re-enforcements to Breed's Hill, with their muskets, as volunteers; fought valiantly, and the former was wounded.

But five days after the battle of Bunker Hill, General Ward writes Congress, that, unless enlisting orders be immediately furnished him, he shall be left entirely alone. The day before, however, that body resolved, that an army of thirty thousand was necessary, that Massachusetts would raise thirteen thousand six hundred, and that the other New England states should have notice given them, and be requested to furnish their respective proportions. But the battle of Lexington was a beacon fire to the neighbouring states. The hardy yeomen, whom rage supplied with arms, did not wait to be summoned by the tardy process of

legislation ; they seized their hunting pieces, and flew to join their brethren at the scene of danger.

The Committee of Safety, elected anew by Congress at every session, were the real executive of Massachusetts. The members were now John Hancock and Benjamin Greenleaf, who never took their seats, John Pigeon and Enoch Freeman, seldom present, and Joseph Warren, chairman, Benjamin Church, Benjamin White, Joseph Palmer, Abraham Watson, Samuel Holten, Azor Orne, Nathan Cushing, and Richard Devens. They were empowered generally to watch over the safety of the commonwealth, and advise Congress of such measures as they thought beneficial ; and expressly commissioned :

“ To assemble such and so many of the militia, and them to dispose and place where and detain so long as said committee shall judge necessary, and discharge said militia when the safety of the colony will admit. And the officers of the said militia are enjoined to obey the orders and directions of said Committee of Safety. And also to direct the army of this colony to be stationed where said Committee of Safety shall judge most conducive to the defence and service of this colony ; and the general and other officers of the army are requested to render strict obedience to such orders of said committee ; but Congress have power to control any order of the Committee of Safety. Also to nomi-

nate persons to Congress to be commissioned officers in the army, and to give enlisting orders to such persons as they think proper. And if any officers be ready to be commissioned agreeable to the resolve of this Congress, during the recess of the same, the Committee shall fill up and deliver to them commissions to be furnished said Committee in blank for that purpose."

This committee distributed beating or enlisting orders throughout the state to those whom they thought qualified to raise recruits. The number of a company was reduced from one hundred to fifty-nine; and he who could enlist this number was entitled to a captain's commission, and one who procured ten captains with companies to serve under him commanded the regiment. The Congress of Massachusetts issued an eloquent address to the people, which would do honour to any legislature on earth. The recruits came in with spirit, and by the middle of June the New England army of citizen soldiers enlisted for a few months amounted to about fifteen thousand troops.

About ten thousand of these were of Massachusetts; animated with the same love of liberty which inspired the whole, they were most confident in the rectitude of their cause, in which they were thoroughly instructed by James Otis, who led the forlorn hope of the revolution, John Adams, Quincy, Hancock, Samuel Adams, and other enlightened patriots. And they were fighting battles more peculiarly their own, in

defence of their wives, children, and homes. But the more animating consideration to them as soldiers, was the chivalrous reputation of their ancestors and themselves, who had been in constant battle and constant victory against their formidable savage foe, and had more recently proved at Nova Scotia and Louisburgh that they were equally formidable against the civilized troops of Europe.

The regiment of artillery was organized under Colonel Richard Gridley, Lieutenant-Colonel William Burbeck, Majors David Mason and Scarborough Gridley, and ten captains, with one six, two brass four, and six iron three pound cannon.

Rhode Island had sent a regiment to Massachusetts, imbued with the determined spirit of civil and religious liberty, which the founder of their state maintained through every peril. Colonel Green was their commander, one of the most promising heroes of the revolution. The elements of a soldier were so mixed in him, that the wise already foresaw his elevated rank among warriors the most distinguished. Under him were Lieutenant-Colonel Olney and Major Boxan, experienced English soldiers. Two field pieces were attached to the corps.

The hardy yeomanry of New Hampshire, beneath whose ponderous strokes the formidable forests, and the savages who inhabited them, had been levelled with the ground, who had been used to little control but what the God

of Nature imposed, were moved with indignation at approaching tyranny. They flocked as volunteers to the neighbourhood of Boston, and chose Colonel Stark, Lieutenant-Colonel Wyman, and Major M'Clary, their leaders.

Their colonel was worthy to command this formidable band ; he had been a distinguished captain of Provincial Rangers received into the service of the crown ; was at Quebec, under General Wolfe, and enjoyed half pay, as a British officer, an offering he made with other sacrifices, for the good of his country.

Their major also was a favourite officer. Six feet and a half in height, with a Herculean form in perfect proportions, a voice like Stentor, and strength of Ajax ; ever unequalled in athletic exercises, and unsubdued in single combat ; whole bodies of men had been overcome by him ; and he seemed totally unconscious that he was not equally unconquerable at the cannon's mouth. His mind and character were of the same grand and energetic cast with his person ; and though deficient in the advantages of finished education, he had been a member of the state legislature, and his mercantile concerns were extensive.

These troops were followed by another regiment from New Hampshire, which arrived on the fifteenth of June, under Colonel Reed, Lieutenant-Colonel Gilman, and Major Hale.

Connecticut, essentially and undeviatingly republican, was behind none of the provinces

in her determined hostility to the usurpation and encroachments of the throne. To her antipathy to royalty the proscribed judges of Charles the First had owed their inviolable asylum in her territory. Religious as well as civil liberty was in jeopardy, and the former with her was paramount to all earthly considerations. In her vocabulary the British troops were the Philistines, and Putnam, the American Samson, a chosen instrument to defeat the foe; and fortunately she inspired her own confidence into all her sister states.

With their usual sagacity, however, these troops, notwithstanding a confident reliance on supernatural aid, did not neglect all human means to secure it. Their state government, constitution, and establishments, continued unchanged. Their troops were better armed, better disciplined and provisioned, than any troops in the New England army.

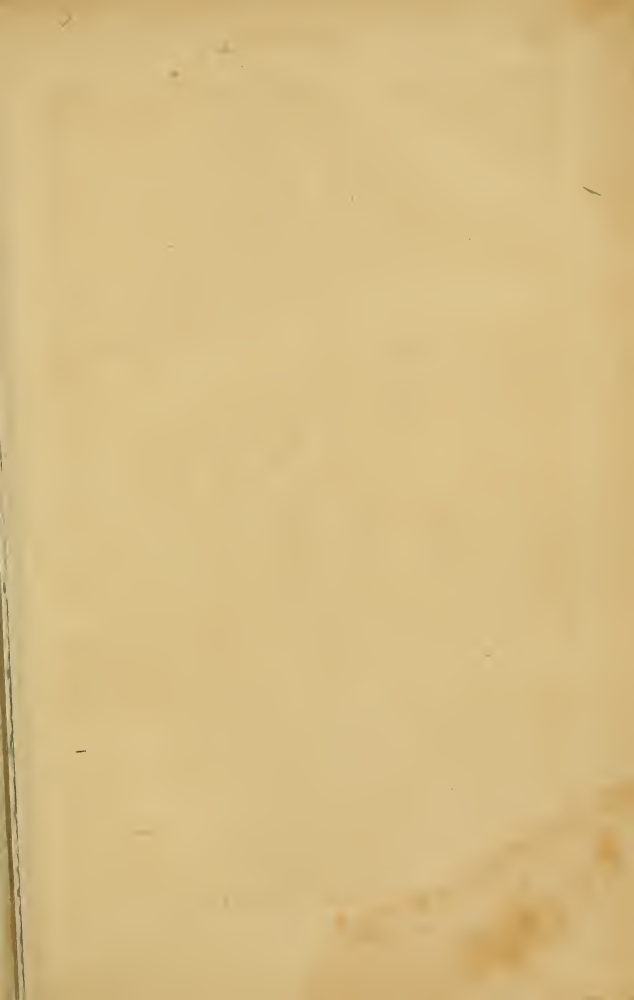
General Ward was a gentleman of liberal education, vigorous understanding, and distinguished probity. He had been a member of the council, speaker of the assembly, and chief justice of one of the courts in Massachusetts. He professed the rigid tenets of New England religion, and his rank and character commanded an extensive influence in the country. He had also served with reputation in the war of 1756, was a lieutenant-colonel at the storming of Ticonderoga, under General Abercrombie, and soon after commanded the regiment. He

had also been a colonel in the militia, an office from which Governor Hutchinson relieved him on account of his being too true a patriot.

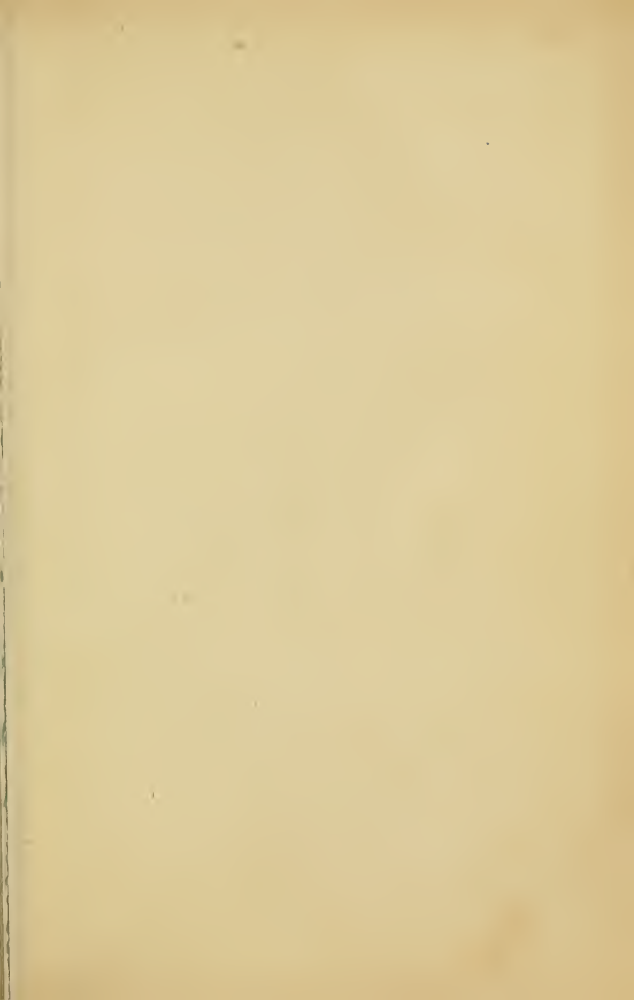
General Thomas received the appointment of lieutenant-general, which he accepted on the the 27th of May. His superior talents, cultivated by a liberal education, his gallantry, activity, and vigilance as a soldier, purity as a patriot, and honour as a man, commanded the entire confidence of all who knew him. He had served in the former war with reputation, and had already distinguished himself in this. Being in command at Roxbury, with a feeble force, General Gage had determined to drive him from that important post. But his vigilance detected the design, and defeated it.

On the day fixed for the attack, all his troops were paraded, marching them round the hill on which he was encamped, in view of Boston, and returning those in front by a short rout again to the rear, they wore the appearance of a long column of troops. Being without uniform, the deception was perfect, and General Gage, alarmed with the show of force, relinquished the enterprise.

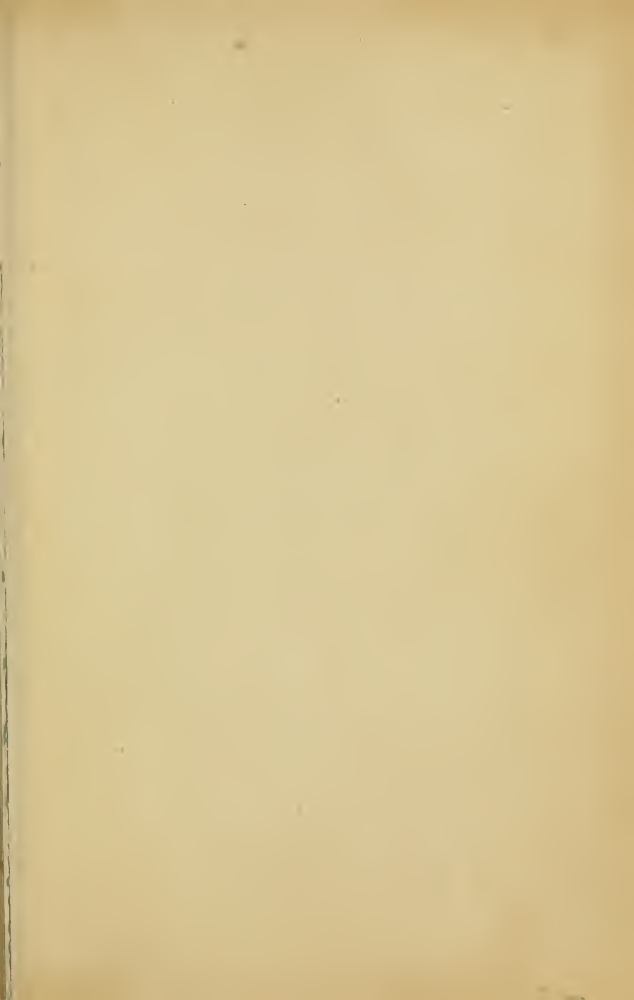
















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